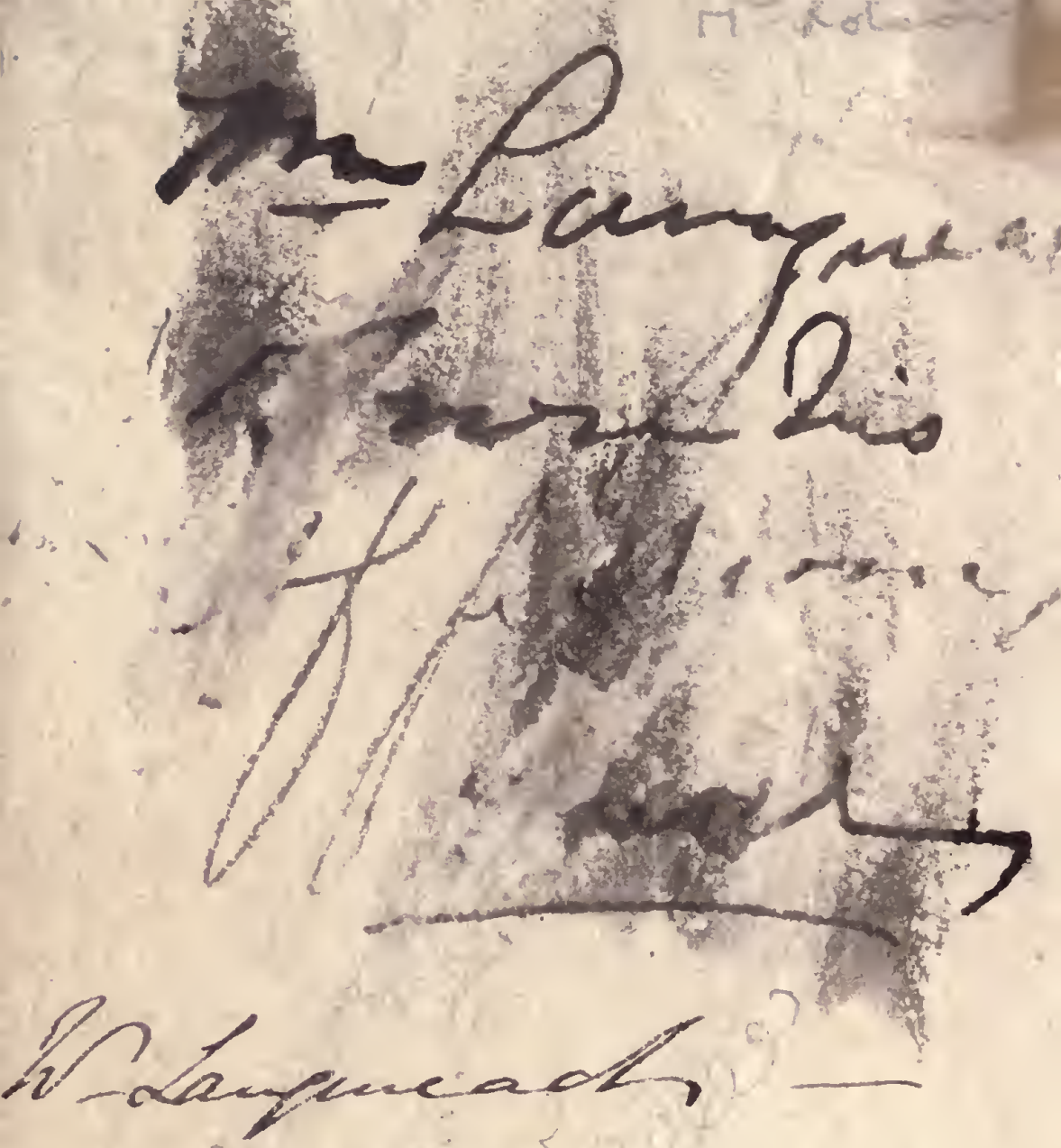

CHILDREN'S BOOK
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LOS ANGELES

AUNT MARY'S

TALES,

FOR THE

ENTERTAINMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

OF

LITTLE BOYS.

ADDRESSED TO HER NEPHEWS.

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TO MY NEPHEWS.

YOUR alarm, my dear boys, lest your sisters were to be the exclusive objects of my attention, is very gratifying to my feelings, as a proof of the value you set on my endeavours to amuse. The two following stories are more particularly your own; though, as virtue and knowledge have no right to a distinction of sexes, what is serviceable to the one, will not, I hope, be unacceptable to the other. My wish has always been to convince you, that natural history and philosophy are, in a great degree, accessible even to childish capacities, at the same time that

that the study is laying up stores of pleasure and amusement for the more advanced periods of life. Should I be so fortunate as to create or strengthen in your minds, a taste for such pleasures, you will, I am sure, have great reason to thank me; and I, in return, shall enjoy the unspeakable satisfaction of thinking that I have conferred a lasting benefit on those, who must ever be dear to the heart of their affectionate aunt

MARY.

AUNT MARY'S TALES.

The rival Friend.

CHAP. I.

The School-Room.

"YOUNG gentlemen," said Dr. Friendly, (throwing open the door of a large school-room, and discovering a number of boys busily employed in their different lessons,) "I have brought you a new companion, who is come to announce a holiday to you for the rest of the day, that you may be more at liberty to show him the rites of hospitality, on his entering amongst you. Monitors, dismiss your classes, and I will meet you on the play-ground in half an hour, to consider how we must spend our day of leisure." The Doctor was turning round to go back to the

parlour, when he perceived the young stranger, whom he had brought with him, standing irresolute, whether he ought to return with him, or remain where he was: "Oh," said the Doctor, recollecting himself, "I must not leave you thus in the midst of strangers, without introducing you more particularly to some of them;" then, taking the young gentleman by the hand, and stepping forward a little, "Edward Loraine," said he, "come and welcome this new companion, for he is a fellow-townsman of yours, and pretty nearly of your own age." Edward immediately came forward, with a countenance which beamed with intelligence, good temper, and animation, and taking the young stranger cordially by the hand, welcomed him in the most courteous manner to their little society. "I may now leave you, I think," said Dr. Friendly, "for I have placed you in good hands; and would recommend it to you to bespeak Edward Loraine's friendship in good time: I assure you, it is worth having." He then left them, and Edward invited his new companion

companion to go with him to his place for a few minutes, till he had put his books and different things by, when he should then have nothing to do but attend to him. It was no small amusement to one who had never seen any thing of the kind before, to observe the order and regularity with which every thing was conducted in this school, even though the master was absent; for each class had a monitor, or head, who was always the cleverest boy belonging to it, to direct their movements, and to whom they were all obedient: by his command they all put their things in the places particularly set apart for them, and this being done, they marched out of the school-room according to their vicinity to the door; nor was a voice heard, excepting those who gave the word of command, till they arrived on the play-ground, when all restraint at once discarded, amusement was then sought, with the avidity of those who have known what it was to have their whole attention engaged for some time with pursuits of a more serious nature. Tops, kites, and bats,

were each resorted to by different parties; and Edward asked the young stranger what game he should prefer.

"It is some time since I gave over playing at any of them," replied he, in a contemptuous tone, which seemed to scorn such childish pursuits.

"Oh dear," said Edward, "that is a pity; for I rather think you will regret that you have not kept up your skill by practice, when you see Dr. Friendly begin to play."

"Dr. Friendly play!" exclaimed his companion, (whom we must now introduce by the name of Alfred Granby,) and am I come to school to learn to play?"

"No," said Edward, "I dare say you are come to school for the same purpose that brought us all here: but, perhaps, there may not be any harm, when you are tired with studying Euclid or Virgil, to relieve yourself by a little bodily exercise; and, I assure you, though you may think hoop or bat too childish, you will have some difficulty to keep up your credit at leap-pole or cricket, and a

few

few other such games, for there are some who are very clever at them: but we have none of us any chance with Dr. Friendly."

"Oh yes, Edward," interrupted Thomas Goodly, a little boy who stood near, and who had been listening to the conversation, "you almost come up to him: and you know Dr. Friendly says, that, considering you are not so strong, and that your legs are shorter, you do quite as well, if not better, than he does; and, you know, he said yesterday, that you were at work, as you were at play, the cleverest in the school."

"That is only the Doctor's kindness and wish to encourage us," replied Edward, blushing at the unqualified praise of his friend.

"No; it is your modesty, that never can bear to say any thing that seems like praising yourself."

"That is good management, for he seems to get a double share from you, to make up for it," said Alfred, in a sneering tone. It was now time for Thomas's choler to rise,

and he was about to vindicate his own sincerity and his friend's merits, when Edward, who knew the impetuosity of his temper, and afraid lest a serious quarrel might ensue, was very glad to interrupt the conversation by announcing the approach of Dr. Friendly. No sooner was the Doctor seen, than the boys, with one accord, flocked round him with as much pleasure in their countenances as though they had been welcoming a favourite play-fellow. "Well," said he, "what do you say to a pretty long walk this beautiful day? Do not you think, with the assistance of our long poles, we could have some good sport on the common?"

"Oh yes, Sir, do let us go," and, "Oh, how nice it will be!" were generally reiterated through the whole party; and they immediately hastened to equip themselves for their little journey, but Edward, before he went, turned to Alfred, and said: "You have not got a leaping-pole; but mine will do for us both, at present: and you will be better able to

to tell, when you have practised a little, what kind of one you would like."

"Perhaps so; but at present, I know very little of boys' play," said Alfred, in a tone which seemed to imply that it was long since he was so much of a child as he found his present companions to be.

It was not long before they set out; and Edward, though in the habit of keeping near Dr. Friendly, whose conversation he had great pleasure in attending to, attached himself, during their walk, entirely to Alfred, and took great pains to point out the different beautiful views which presented themselves as they went along. On their arrival at the common, they all sat down on the slope of a little hillock, to rest themselves before they began to play, and to arrange the order in which they were to proceed. They had been engaged in conversation some time, before Edward discovered that Alfred had sat down on the opposite side of the hill, where he was out of hearing of what had been passing amongst them. "How unsociable he is,"

said

said one of the boys, on Edward's remarking the distance at which Alfred had placed himself; "he does not seem to wish to have any thing to say to any of us."

"He is a stranger, you know," replied Edward; "and it is our place to show him attention, and endeavour to gain his good will."

"But if he repays us all, as he has done you," said another, "I think we shall have but little encouragement; for he seems to have nothing in him but ill-nature."

"Oh, indeed you are mistaken," answered Edward: "I have often heard of Alfred Granby, and know that he is very clever: but, I suppose, it is only a short time since he lost his father; and, perhaps, his thinking of him may make him so dull." Edward then went to him, and, desirous of changing the subject of his meditation, asked him if he had expected to see Dr. Friendly so young a man. "Oh, yes," replied Alfred, "I knew exactly what he was, long before I came here. A gentleman, who was a very intimate friend

of

of my father's, used to talk of Dr. Friendly, and of you too, very often to him, and urge him to send me to this school: but I never expected to come; nor should I have done so, if my father had lived, at least as long as you were here: but when my father died, he left this gentleman my guardian, and, of course, I was sent."

"But why would your father not have sent you whilst I was here?" asked Edward, with astonishment.

"Why, do you not know that my father and yours were enemies?" asked Alfred, with equal surprise.

"No, indeed I did not: nor do I believe my father was ever an enemy to any one in his life. But, even supposing that were the case, it is no reason why we should be so too."

"Oh, but it is," replied Alfred; "and, now that my father is dead, I shall always look upon those as my enemies who were his. You may treat me civilly at present, to please Dr. Friendly and my guardian, who, I know,

is

is very kind to you; but, I am sure, when you are your own master, it is impossible that you should like me any better than I do you."

"I hope I shall be able to convince you that you are mistaken, before you have been many months amongst us," replied Edward, in a gentle voice, and a smile of the most perfect good temper.

"I do not wish to be convinced," returned his companion: "I tell you plainly, that I disliked you before ever I saw you, nor have I any wish to alter my opinion." Whilst Alfred spoke, he was giving vent to the irritability of his temper by pulling up pieces of grass, and throwing them about him.

"Oh, what mischief you are doing!" exclaimed Thomas Goodly, who had come to tell them that they were about to begin their game.

"What mischief?" asked Alfred, in a sullen tone; for as Thomas had declared himself so warmly Edward's friend, he, of course, looked upon him as his own enemy.

"Do

"Do you not see what a number of poor little ants you have unhoused, by pulling up that grass? And look, how you have laid open all the passages that, I dare say, lead to their store-room."

"They may make new ones again then; for I shall hardly consider, when I wish to amuse myself, whether I may incommode a few ants by doing so or not," returned Alfred; and, as he spoke, he continued to pull up the grass by handsful.

"Nor I either," said Thomas; "but when I saw that I was distressing them without amusing myself, I would give over; for there is a great deal more pleasure in watching them, than in destroying their work."

"I have never yet discovered any thing interesting about them," answered Alfred; "when I do, I shall pay them a little more respect." Dr. Friendly, though he had come near enough to hear this conversation, made no remark upon it, but called the boys to come and let him see which could take the longest leap. Alfred stood and watched their different

different operations, but when it came to Edward's turn, he saw that he sprung with so much agility, and to so much greater a distance than, he was conscious, he could himself do, that, when invited by Dr. Friendly to try his skill with the rest, he excused himself on the plea of being tired with his journey and walk; and the Doctor forbore to urge him, perhaps from some little suspicion of the real motive of his declining, but left him to look on, whilst they all amused themselves with the most innocent and harmless gaiety. But, though Alfred was a spectator, he was in no degree a partaker of their mirth, for he had but few feelings in unison with theirs. He had been several years at a school where he had been looked up to as the head, and treated with all possible deference: his abilities were above the common order, and accustomed, on that account, to be very much flattered and indulged by his parents, he could ill brook the idea of giving way to any one, much less to a boy of whom he had always been in the habit of thinking with

dislike

dislike and jealousy, because the son of a man whom his father had foolishly imagined his enemy, on account of a difference in their opinions, which had sometimes shown itself when they had met on public business, though always on the part of Mr. Loraine with great mildness and candour. Alfred had also frequently heard Edward mentioned, by the gentleman before alluded to, with great admiration; and foolishly imagining that praise bestowed upon another was a tacit reproof to himself, it served to increase his ill-will and animosity to a great degree. With these dispositions Alfred entered upon his new school, predetermined to dislike and be dissatisfied with every body and every thing which he met with there.

CHAP. II.

The Ants.

A MIND less prejudiced than Alfred's was against the objects before him, could not but have been delighted at the sight of so many happy faces as presented themselves, whilst Dr. Friendly and his young group leaped and jumped, and tried a variety of feats, each desirous of excelling, without experiencing a feeling of mortification at being excelled; for the Doctor was ever on the watch to check the first symptoms of ill-temper, and discourage the slightest impropriety of behaviour; for though he joined in the amusements of his young people, with the ease and affability of an equal, yet he contrived to maintain the most unlimited authority, and exact the most ready obedience, with an influence, the effects of which, even Alfred was obliged, in a very few hours, to acknowledge. He was a great advocate

advocate for regular and pretty severe bodily exercise; and possessing himself great activity and agility, he made a point of keeping his pupils in the constant habit of it, from a persuasion that it tended to strengthen both the bodily and mental faculties.

The day was far advanced before the party got home again, and by the time they had had the necessary refreshment after their walk, the evening was closed in; and the time for the boys to prepare their lessons for the following day arrived. As Alfred had not yet got his place assigned him, or any work fixed for him to do, he was an idle spectator, whilst all the other boys prepared to settle to their various employments. Edward came up to him with as much cordiality in his manner, as when he first spoke to him, and asked in what manner he should like to employ himself till seven o'clock; "for Dr. Friendly," said he, "allows us till that time to prepare our lessons, and then he joins us, and always provides something or other to amuse us with; when we are all very happy, unless there

happens to be any who has failed in his lessons during the day, for then he is packed off to bed, instead of enjoying himself with the rest."

"And is that all the time that the Doctor ever allows us to ourselves?" asked Alfred, in a dissatisfied tone.

"Yes," answered Edward, "is it not very good of him, to devote so much of his time to us?"

"It is a kind of goodness I could very readily excuse," said Alfred, "for I do not like to be so constantly watched."

"It is not to watch as though he suspected us, that he comes," replied Edward, "it is to help us to amuse ourselves, and to put us into a good way of spending our time. You will soon find that he makes the evenings so pleasant to us, that there is nothing we are so much afraid of, as neglecting our lessons, lest we should be sent to bed. But I must set about mine," added he, "lest I should get into that scrape: and see, here are my books, and

and here is my drawing-box, for you to amuse yourself with whilst we are busy."

Alfred took up a book, but with little inclination to enjoy it, for his mind was unsettled, and he felt out of humour with every thing he met with. No sooner had the time-piece in the hall given notice of seven o'clock, than the boys began to pack up their slates and books, and they had got all in order by the time the Doctor appeared, not many minutes after. He entered with the kindest interest into their different pursuits, and assisted them in their various employments; for he made a point that they should all employ themselves in some way or other, whilst they by turns read something aloud, which served for the amusement of the whole. Some were preparing scenes for a theatre, which they intended to erect, and others for a magic lantern: one was making a set of paper figures, to dance upon a pewter plate, when they tried electrical experiments; and another contriving a machine with which to measure the power of cohesion between two flat surfaces;

whilst another party were employed in making a set of conjuring boxes, by means of magnetism. "What are you about, Tom?" asked Dr. Friendly, as he looked over Thomas Goodly's shoulder.

"He is beginning a piece of work that I recommended to him to-day, Sir," said Edward, with an arch smile.

"What is it?" again enquired the Doctor.

"Edward advised me, Sir, to repair this old thermometer of his; and he says, if I will carry it about with me, and take care to hold it in my hand, and watch that it does not rise above blood heat when any thing vexes me, I shall never be in a passion."

"A very good recipe, I believe," said the Doctor, smiling, "and I think I may venture to say, that if you will do this regularly, for one year, you will never be in a passion again."

"But how can it prevent my getting into one," asked Thomas, in a tone of unbelief.

"Because, by the time you have taken your thermometer out of your pocket, you will

will have had time to recollect the folly of giving way to passion; and that will be sufficient to prevent your getting into one. Will it not?"

"Then Edward has only been making a joke of me all this time," said Thomas, his choler rising as he spoke.

"Oh, take hold of your thermometer," cried Edward, laughing: "be quick, or it will lose its effect."

Thomas took hold of the thermometer, and checking his impetuosity,—"See," said he, holding it out, "it does not rise above blood heat."

"That is very well done, my little fellow," said Dr. Friendly, clapping his head: "there is more merit in checking a rising gust of temper in this manner, than those who have not such gusts to check, have any idea of; and, as a reward for the effort, you shall go to my study, and bring a large book which you will find on the table, and read us a very interesting account of a species of the ants, whose cause you espoused so warmly to day.

Thomas,

Thomas, delighted with these expressions of approbation, ran to bring the book, which was *Smellie's Philosophy of Natural History;* from which Dr. Friendly selected the following account of the architecture and economy of a species of ants, common in the tropical climates.

"The nests of the *termites bellicosi*, or wood-lice, are called hills, by the natives of Africa, New Holland, and other hot climates. This appellation is highly proper, for they are often elevated ten or twelve feet above the surface of the earth, and are nearly of a conical figure.

"What kind of shape is that?" interrupted one of the little boys; for Dr. Friendly had always encouraged them to ask the meaning of any thing that they did not understand.

"Can you tell him, Thomas?" asked the Doctor.

"It is the shape of a sugar loaf," answered Thomas: "is it not, Sir?"

"Yes," replied Dr. Friendly, "and you are

are perfectly right to explain yourself by a comparison with familiar objects, when you possibly can: now proceed."

"These hills, instead of being rare appearances, are so frequent in many places near Senegal, that, as described with great propriety by Mons. Adanson, their number, magnitude, and closeness of situation, make them appear like villages of the negroes. 'But of all the extraordinary things I observed,' says Mons. Adanson, 'nothing struck me more than certain eminences, which, by their height and regularity, made me take them, at a distance, for an assemblage of negroes huts, or a considerable village; and yet they were only the nests of certain insects. These nests are round pyramids, from eight to ten feet high, upon nearly the same base, with a smooth surface of rich clay, excessively hard, and well built.' Jobson, in his History of Gambia, tells us, That the ant-hills are remarkable; cast up in those parts by pismires, some of them twenty feet in height, of compass to contayne a dozen of men; with the heat

of

of the sun baked into that hardness, that we used to hide ourselves in the ragged tops of them, when we took up stands to shoot at deer or wild beasts.—Mr. Bosman remarks, in his description of Guinea, that the ants make nests of the earth, about twice the height of a man. Each of these hills is composed of an exterior, and an interior part: the exterior cover is a large clay shell, which is shaped like a dome. Its strength and magnitude are sufficient to enclose and protect the interior building from the injuries of the weather, and to defend its numerous inhabitants from the attacks of natural, or accidental enemies. The external dome, or cover, is therefore always much stronger than the internal building, which is the habitation of the insects, and is divided with wonderful artifice and regularity, into a vast number of apartments, for the residence and accommodation of the king and queen; for the nursing of their progeny; and for magazines, which are always well stored with provisions.

"These hills make their first appearance in

in the form of conical turrets, about a foot high. In a short time, the insects erect at a distance other turrets, and go on increasing their number, and widening their bases, till their underworks are covered with these turrets, which the animals always raise highest in the middle of the hill, and by filling up the intervals between each turret, collect them at last into one great dome.

The royal chamber, Mr. Smeathman remarks, which is occupied by the king and queen, appears to be, in the opinion of this little people, of the most consequence, and is always situated as near the centre of the interior building as possible, and generally about the height of the common surface of the ground. It is always nearly in the shape of half an egg, within, and may be supposed to represent a long oven. In the infant state of the colony, it is not above an inch, or thereabout in length, but in time will be increased to six or eight inches, or more, in the clear; being always proportioned to the size of the queen, who, increasing in bulk as in age, at length

requires

requires a chamber of such dimensions. The entrances into the royal chamber, will not admit any animal larger than the soldiers or labourers. Hence the king and the queen, (which last, when full grown, is a thousand times the weight of a king,) can never possibly go out. The royal chamber is surrounded by an innumerable quantity of others, which are of different sizes, figures, and dimensions; but all of them are arched, either in a circular, or an elliptical form.

"That is another word that I do not understand," said the same little boy who had before interrupted Thomas.

"Let me see," said Thomas, "what I can get to explain the shape to you, that you are acquainted with. Oh, the large oval tea-board that our suppers are brought in upon, will do, I believe."

"It will so," replied Dr. Friendly, much pleased at seeing the little boy take so much pains to explain himself simply.

"These chambers either open into each other, or have communicating passages; which

which being always clear, are evidently intended for the soldiers and attendants, of whom, as will soon appear, great numbers are necessary. These apartments are joined by the magazines and nurseries. The magazines are chambers of clay, and are at all times well stored with provisions; which, to the naked eye, seem to consist of the raspings of wood and plants, which the termites destroy, but when examined by the microscope, they are found to consist chiefly of the gums, or inspissated juices of plants, thrown together in small, irregular masses.

"*Inspissated*, means thickened, I think," said Thomas, pausing a moment, from his reading.

"It does," answered the Doctor. And Thomas went on.

"Of these masses, some are finer than others, and resemble the sugar about preserved fruits; others resemble the tears of gum: one being quite transparent, another like amber; a third, brown; and a fourth, perfectly opaque.

"The magazines are always intermixed

with the nurseries; which last are buildings totally different from the rest of the apartments. They are composed entirely of wooden materials, which seem to be cemented with gums. Mr. Smeathman very properly gives them the appellation of nurseries, because they are invariably occupied by the eggs, and the young ones, which first appear in the shape of labourers, but they are as white as snow. These buildings are exceedingly compact, and are divided into a number of small, irregular-shaped chambers, not one of which is half an inch wide. They are placed all round, and as near as possible to the royal apartments. When a nest, or hillock, is in the infant state, the nurseries are close to the royal apartment. But as, in process of time, the body of the queen enlarges, it becomes necessary, for her accommodation, to augment the dimensions of her chamber. She then, likewise, lays a greater number of eggs, and requires more attendants; of course, it is necessary, that both the number and dimensions of the adjacent apartments, should be augmented.

mented. For this purpose, the small, first-built nurseries are taken to pieces, rebuilt a little further off, made a size larger, and their number at the same time is increased. Thus the animals are continually employed in pulling down, repairing, or rebuilding their apartments; and these operations they perform with wonderful sagacity, regularity, and foresight.

"One remarkable circumstance regarding the nurseries, must not be omitted. They are always slightly overgrown with a kind of mould, and plentifully sprinkled with white globules, about the size of a small pin's head. These globules, Mr. Smeathman at first conjectured to be the eggs; but when examined by the microscope, they evidently appear to be a species of mushroom, in shape resembling our eatable mushroom when young. When entire, they are white, like snow a little melted, and frozen again; and when bruised, they seem to be composed of an infinite number of pellucid particles, approaching to oval forms, and are with difficulty separated from

each other. The mouldiness seems likewise to consist of the same kind of substance.

"The nurseries are enclosed in chambers of clay, like those which contain the provisions, but they are much larger. In the early state of the nest, they are not bigger than a hazel nut; but in great hills, they are often as large as a child's head of a year old.

"The royal chamber is situated nearly on a level with the surface of the ground, at an equal distance from all the sides of the building, and directly under the point of the hill. On all sides, both above and below, it is surrounded by what are called the royal apartments, which contain only labourers and soldiers, who can be intended for no other purpose than to continue in the nest, either to guard or serve their common father and mother; on whose safety the happiness, and, in the estimation of the negroes, the existence of the whole community depends. These apartments compose an intricate labyrinth, which extends a foot or more in diameter, from the royal chamber, on every side. Here the nurse-

ries and magazines of provisions begin, and being separated by small empty chambers and galleries, which surround them, and communicate with each other, are continued on all sides on the outward shell, and reach up within it two-thirds, or three-fourths of its height, leaving an open area in the middle, under the dome, which resembles the nave of an old cathedral. This area is surrounded by large Gothic arches, which are sometimes two or three feet high, next the front of the area; but diminish rapidly as they recede, like the arches in aisles in perspective, and are soon lost among the innumerable chambers and nurseries behind them. All these chambers and passages are arched, and contribute mutually to support one another. The interior building, or assemblage of nurseries, chambers, and passages, has a flattish roof without any perforation. By this contrivance, if by accident water should penetrate the external dome, the apartments below are preserved from injury. The area has also a flattish floor, which is situated above the royal

It is likewise water-proof, and so constructed, that if water gets admittance, it runs off by subterraneous passages, which are of an astonishing magnitude. I measured one of them, says Mr. Smeathman, which was perfectly cylindrical, and thirteen inches in diameter."

Again Thomas was obliged to pause, to give an explanation of the word *cylindrical;* which he did, by showing a round ruler, which lay near him; and said, that any thing which was round, with flat ends, was a cylinder.

"These subterraneous passages are lined with the same kind of clay of which the hill is composed; ascend the internal part of the external shell, in a spiral form, and winding round the whole building up to the top, intersect and communicate with each other, at different heights. From every part of these large galleries, a number of pipes, or smaller galleries, leading to different apartments of the building, proceed. There are, likewise, a great many which lead downward, by sloping descents,

descents, three and four feet perpendicular underground, among the gravel, from which the labouring termites select the finer parts; which, after being worked up in their mouths, to the consistence of mortar, become that solid clay, or stone, of which their hills and and every apartment of their buildings, except the nurseries, are composed. Other galleries ascend, and lead out horizontally on every side, and are carried underground, but near the surface, to great distances. Suppose the whole nests, within a hundred yards of a house, were completely destroyed, the inhabitants of those at a greater distance will carry on their subterraneous galleries, and invade the goods and merchandises contained in it, by sap and mine, unless great attention and circumspection are employed by the proprietor.

"Mr. Smeathman concludes his description of the habitations of the *termites bellicosi*, with much modesty, in the following words: 'Thus I have described, as briefly as the subject would admit, and, I trust, without exaggeration,

exaggeration, those wonderful buildings, whose size and external form have often been mentioned by travellers, but whose interior and most curious parts are so little known, that I may venture to consider my account of them as new, which is the only merit it has; for they are constructed upon so different a plan from any thing else upon the earth, and so complicated, that I cannot find words equal to the task.'

"When a breach is made in one of the hills, by an axe or other instrument, the first object that attracts attention is the behaviour of the soldiers, or fighting insects. Immediately after the blow is given a soldier comes out, walks about the breach, and seems to examine the enemy, or the cause of the attack. He then goes into the hill, gives the alarm, and, in a short time, large bodies rush out as fast as the breach will permit. It is not easy to describe the fury these fighting insects discover. In their eagerness to repel the enemy they frequently tumble down the hill, but recover themselves very quickly,

and

and bite every thing they encounter. This biting, joined to the striking of their forceps upon the building, makes a crackling or vibrating noise, which is somewhat shriller and quicker than the ticking of a watch, and may be heard at the distance of three or four feet. While the attack proceeds, they are in the most violent bustle and agitation. If they get hold of any part of a man's body, they instantly make a wound which discharges as much blood as is equal to their own weight. When they attack the leg, the stain of blood upon the stocking extends more than an inch in width. They make their hooked jaws meet at the first stroke, and never quit their hold, but suffer themselves to be pulled away leg by leg, and piece after piece, without the smallest attempt to escape. On the other hand, if a person keeps out of their reach, and gives them no further disturbance, in less than half an hour they retire into the nest, as if they supposed the wonderful monster that damaged their castle had fled.

"Before the whole of the soldiers have got in,

in, the labouring insects are all in motion, and hasten toward the breach, each of them having a quantity of tempered mortar in his mouth. This mortar they stick upon the breach as fast as they arrive, and perform the operation with so much dispatch and facility, that, notwithstanding the immensity of their numbers, they never stop or embarrass one one another. During this scene of apparent hurry and confusion, the spectator is agreeably surprised when he perceives a regular wall gradually arising and filling up the chasm. While the labourers are thus employed, almost all the soldiers remain within, except here and there one who saunters about among six hundred or a thousand labourers, but never touches the mortar. One soldier, however, always takes his station close to the wall that the labourers are building. This soldier turns himself leisurely on all sides, and at intervals of a minute or two raises his head, beats upon the building with his forceps, and makes the vibrating noise formerly mentioned. A loud hiss instantly issues from the

the inside of the dome, and all the subterraneous caverns and passages. That this hiss proceeds from the labourers is apparent; for, at every signal of this kind, they work with with redoubled quickness and alacrity. A renewal of the attack, however, instantly changes the scene. 'On the first stroke,' says Mr. Smeathman, 'the labourers run into the many pipes and galleries with which the building is perforated, which they do so quickly that they seem to vanish; for in a few seconds all are gone, and the soldiers rush out as numerous and as vindictive as before. On finding no enemy, they return again, leisurely, into the hill; and, very soon after, the labourers appear, loaded as at first, as active, and as sedulous, with soldiers here and there among them, who act just in the same manner, one or other of them giving the signal to hasten the business. Thus the pleasure of seeing them come out to fight or work, alternately, may be obtained as often as curiosity excites, or time permits; and it will certainly be found, that the one order never

never attempts to fight, or the other to work, let the emergency be ever so great.'

"It is exceedingly difficult to explore the interior parts of a nest or hill. The apartments which surround the royal chamber and the nurseries, and indeed the whole fabrick, have such a dependence on each other, that the breaking of one arch generally pulls down two or three. There is another great obstacle to our researches; namely, the obstinacy of the soldiers, 'who,' says our author, 'fight to the very last, disputing every inch of ground, so well as often to drive away the negroes, who are without shoes, and make white people bleed plentifully through their stockings. Neither can we let a building stand, so as to get a view of the interior parts, without interruption; for while the soldiers are defending the out-works, the labourers keep barricading all the way against us, stopping up the different galleries and passages which lead to the various apartments, particularly the royal chamber, all the entrances to which, they fill up so artfully

fully as not to let it be distinguishable while it remains moist; and externally, it has no other appearance than that of a shapeless lump of clay. It is, however, easily found, from its situation with respect to the other parts of the building, and by the crowds of labourers and soldiers which surround it, who show their loyalty and fidelity by dying under the walls. The royal chamber, in a large nest, is large enough to hold many hundreds of the attendants, besides the royal pair, and you always find it as full of them as it can hold. Those faithful subjects never abandon their charge even in the last distress; for whenever I took out the royal chamber, and, as I often did, preserved it for some time in a large glass bowl, all the attendants continued running in one direction round the king and queen with the utmost solicitude, some of them stopping at the head of the latter, as if to give her something: they also took the eggs from her, and piled them carefully together in some part of the chamber or in the bowl, under, or behind, any pieces of

broken clay which lay most convenient for the purpose."

"Do you think this account is true, Sir?" asked Alfred, when Thomas had finished it.

"I have not the least doubt but it is," answered Dr. Friendly; "for you see we have the authority of several respectable travellers, and have not, therefore, any right to question the truth of it."

"Oh, how I should like to see one of the hills," returned Alfred: "I would travel a long way to see such a curiosity."

"Would it not be better, however," replied Dr. Friendly, "to get a little more acquainted with those things which are more within your reach, before you travel in search of the curiosities of other countries. You would cut but a poor figure amongst travellers abroad, to go so far to see the peculiarities of their insects, when totally unacquainted with the nature of those of your own country."

"Oh, but there is not any thing curious to be seen about the ants that we have here," said

said Alfred: "only a number of little black things creeping about, nobody can tell where, or for what purpose; for I have been told that it is not true, that they lay up food during the summer to support them in the winter, as is generally supposed."

"I believe there has been more sagacity, in that respect, attributed to them than they deserve," replied the Doctor; "for as they become dormant in cold weather, such provision would be unnecessary. But you will find their natural history most curious and interesting, and well worth your attention."

"Oh, yes; it is indeed," said Thomas Goodly: "I have read some very pretty accounts of them, and have always liked, ever since, to watch them. It is wonderful to think such little things should have so much contrivance, and such strong attachments to one another. It makes one wish to know more about insects in general, for I dare say they have, all of them, something curious in their nature or manner of living."

"I do not see any great good it would do you, however, excepting gratifying curiosity," said Alfred.

"Yes," replied Dr. Friendly, "there is a much more important benefit to be derived from it; for, whilst gratifying an innocent curiosity in examining the contrivances which there are for the support and comfort of these little creatures, we are naturally led to adore the power and benevolence of the Great Being who formed and created all; for if *we* think it a condescension to notice or show mercy to these little animals, as so much inferior to ourselves, what must be the benevolence of that Being, who not only takes care of and protects us, but who even makes the most insignificant creature that crawls on the ground, the object of his tender love? To that great and good Being, then, my dear boys, let us now close our evening by addressing ourselves," added the Doctor, with an expression of heart-felt devotion in his countenance; and, as he spoke, every knee

was

was bent, and every heart expanded with gratitude and admiration. And even Alfred retired to bed with feelings of kindness towards the creation at large, which he had never experienced before.

CHAP. III.

The Letter.

THE following day Dr. Friendly began to examine Alfred, in order to see what class he was fit for; and the pride of the young gentleman was much gratified at finding himself, in many branches of education, above Edward, a superiority which the latter felt no pain in acknowledging; for he looked upon it only as an additional spur to his own mind to endeavour to get up to him, which would render his lessons more interesting, by having such an object in view. As he had long entertained a high opinion of Alfred's abilities, he rejoiced in the present opportunity of forming a friendship with him, which even the ungracious reception which his first advances had met with, did not in the least diminish; for he looked upon it as the effect of an opinion formed without knowledge of him,

him, which, he flattered himself, a better acquaintance would soon remove. Unfortunately, however, for the accomplishment of this wish, Dr. Friendly gave notice, soon after Alfred's entrance amongst them, that he should, on the last day of the following month, give a prize to the Latin class, in which Alfred and Edward were, for the best translation of *Cicero on Friendship*: and, as there was not any one of whom Alfred was afraid but Edward, he of course set him down as his rival; and, with Alfred, rivalship and enmity were the same.

"Who do you think has the best chance for the prize?" said one of the boys to another who sat next him: "do not you think Alfred Granby has?"

"I think Edward Loraine has as good a one," replied his neighbour.

"So do I," rejoined Thomas Goodly; "and I hope he will get it: I am sure he deserves it best, for he is the most diligent."

"How can you prove that he is more diligent

diligent than I am?" asked Alfred, with offended pride.

"Because," answered Thomas, "he does not only his own lessons as well, but he is always ready to help others."

"And so do I help others, very often."

"Yes, those you call your friends you do sometimes help; but then you will only help them by doing their lessons for them, and that is not doing them any kindness; but Edward explains things to them, and makes them understand what they are learning. Besides, he never considers whether it is one of your friends, or one of his own, that wants his assistance."

"I wish you would not talk of my friends, as though I had any who were not equally the same to all," said Edward, who joined the party as Thomas was pronouncing these last words: "I do not like to hear such party distinctions. We are all friends, and ought only to have one party amongst us." But Edward's mildness and Thomas's generous warmth were alike unavailing to overcome

come Alfred's proud and forbidding dislike. The kind offices which Edward was continually rendering to him and others, he attributed to a love of praise; his mildness he called want of spirit; and thus, through the discolouring eye of jealousy, he beheld every word and action.

Dr. Friendly told the boys one day, that they might go and amuse themselves in any of the grounds surrounding the house, provided they kept from a stream of water which ran near, and which had so deep and strong a current, that he did not choose to trust them near it, unless he was himself there too; and he was obliged to ride over to the neighbouring town, with a gentleman who had called upon him.

The boys, well pleased with this permission, were hastening off, when one of them looking back, and seeing that Edward still remained behind, called him to come with them. "I will come directly," replied Edward, and then turned again, with eager attention, to listen to the gentleman who was engaged in conversation

conversation with Dr. Friendly. Again he was called, and again returned the same answer, but did not attempt to stir from the place where he was standing.

"Never mind him," cried Alfred, impatiently; "he is only giving himself an air, to make us think that he understands the conversation, and is perhaps joining in it, when, I question if he knows any thing about it. But come, never mind him; let us go, and leave him to follow or not as he will, and when he does come, I doubt whether he will be able to tell us a word that the gentlemen have been talking about."

"Oh, I can tell you that," said Thomas, "for they are talking about the best means of restoring suspended animation; and Dr. Friendly said, any of us might stay and hear who chose it, and I should have done so, only I have just received a letter and a book from my mother, and I would rather read it than hear any thing."

The boys now began to consider what they should play at: some were for one thing and some

some another, but all, except Alfred, agreed in saying they would wait for Edward.

"Never mind him," cried Alfred, offended and mortified at seeing the respect which all agreed in paying to the boy of all others whom he most disliked; "how foolish you all are, to be led so by him. I would have more spirit, and not submit in this manner to a tyrant."

"Oh, fie, Alfred," exclaimed Thomas, raising his eyes from the letter which he was reading, with a flush of indignation colouring his cheek, "how can you be so unjust to Edward, when you know he always behaves so well to you."

"And pray how does he behave so well to me?"

"By always speaking good-temperedly and kindly to you, and never complaining of you, though you know you are often so cross to him. He finds excuses for you, let you do what you will; and we all know that he always gives *you a good character* behind your back."

"I would

"I would rather be without a good character, than be obliged to him for it," said Alfred, in a haughty tone of contempt and passion.

"And so you will be without one, I believe," said Thomas, "if you continue to go on as you have done."

"Perhaps so, Sir; but I will not submit to hear of it from you," returned Alfred, swelling with rage; and, at a loss in what manner to give vent to his passion, he snatched the half-read letter from Thomas's hand, and threw it with violence from him.

The wind, which happened to be pretty brisk, took hold of the expanded sheet, and bore it along much quicker than the owner could pursue, till it was deposited in the middle of the stream, which was bearing it away with great speed, when poor Thomas, hopeless of ever getting it again, burst into a violent flood of tears.

"What is the matter," asked Edward, who at that instant come up to him.

"Oh," exclaimed the weeping boy, "Alfred

"Alfred has thrown away a poetical letter that my mother sent me this morning, with a new book, and see there it is sailing down the stream." Edward did not stop to hear any more, but ran with all the speed in his power to try to recover his friend's treasure. But Thomas's concern for his letter was soon forgotten, in the recollection that Edward was breaking through the injunctions of Dr. Friendly, and would incur his displeasure. "Oh, do not mind it," cried he, running after to stop him; "do not go near the water, for, you know, Dr. Friendly forbade it." Edward, however, paid no attention to his entreaties, but pulling a long, slight branch off a tree near him, ran down to the edge of the water, and as the current dashed the paper to one side, he caught hold of it, and drew it gently on shore. The boys, in their eagerness to see the result of the affair, had all followed very closely to Thomas; but Alfred, disappointed of his expected revenge, and still more mortified that the disappointment should be caused by his rival's exertions, stooped down

as Edward came past him with the dripping letter, which he was conveying in triumph to its owner; but depending, as he stooped, (for Edward was considerably below him,) on the support of an old decayed tree, it proved too weak for its burden, and giving way, precipitated him, in an instant, into the water. All now was terror and consternation; the boys, roused by this accident to a sense of their error in disobeying the orders which they had received, flew from the place, without seeming to recollect that it was necessary to do something for Alfred's safety. But Edward, who had been taught to command himself on every occasion, did not now lose his presence of mind. Seeing by Alfred's movements that he was not a swimmer, and finding, that though a good one himself, it would be impossible for him to overtake him, if he jumped into the water at the place he then was, (for the current, which, owing to late rains, was in that part very strong, had already carried Alfred a long way down,) he determined upon running across a corner of the

the field in which they were, and meeting him at the other side. No sooner had the thought occurred to him, than he flew like lightning to execute it; and without waiting to pull off any of his clothes, he plunged into the water. Directed by the glancing of Alfred's buttons, he made his way to him, and catching hold of the lap of his coat, dragged him out of the water; but not till life appeared to be entirely gone, and the body much bruised by the dashing of the water.

By this time some of the boys had recollected themselves, so far as to run to the house for the servants; for Dr. Friendly and his companion had left home, before Edward had joined his playfellows, and were by that time far out of reach. The servants, unaccustomed to act in such cases, and not considering it possible that any thing could now be done for the restoration of a life, apparently so entirely extinguished, stood, some in silent distress, and others giving way to expressions of the most violent grief. Edward had now an opportunity of showing how far he had under-

stood and benefited by the conversation which Alfred had sneered at him so much for staying to listen to, and which he himself had little idea would be so soon called into action. Recollecting that the gentleman from whom he had got his information, and who was a surgeon of considerable eminence, had said, that no one should be given up as dead, who had not been in the water above half an hour, till every possible means had been tried for several hours, for their recovery; after sending one of the servants for Dr. Friendly and his companion with all speed, he told the others that they must carry the body to a cottage, which was much nearer to them than the house, and which was inhabited by an old woman, who made her living by washing for the young gentlemen of the school. The servants said they thought they might as well take him home at once; but, on Edward's repeating his wish that he might be conveyed to the cottage, they had too high an opinion of, and too much pleasure in obliging him, to hesitate any longer, and were preparing to

lift him by the head and feet, when Edward, recollecting that the body ought to be carried in an easy, reclining posture, begged that they would not disturb it till he came back. He then ran to the cottage, and returned with an arm chair, on which the body was placed, and conveyed to the old woman's house. It was there immediately laid on a bed, and the wet clothes stripped off as speedily as possible; whilst Edward requested the old woman to make up a good fire, and to throw the windows open, to cause a free circulation of air. Dame Meadows, (for that was the old woman's name,) fortunately was ironing, and Edward, who knew that heated bricks, or bottles filled with hot water, had been recommended, thought that the irons, when reduced to a moderate heat by being put into cold water, and then rolled in flannel, would answer the same purpose, without losing time soon had them applied to the soles of the feet, and palms of the hands; whilst the flannel cloth on which the dame was ironing, served for a warm blanket in which to roll the body.

He then got a little spirit to rub the temples with, whilst he occasionally breathed gently into his mouth, holding Alfred's nose with one hand, and with the other pressing frequently on his breast, in imitation of the playing of the lungs. All these efforts were, however, tried in vain for some time, and poor Edward became doubly anxious for the arrival of Dr. Friendly, lest the want of success should be owing to the omission of something which he had forgotten. At length a faint sigh gave symptoms of returning life. "Oh, he will live, he will live," exclaimed he, his eyes beaming with delight; "he will live to reward us all."

At almost the same moment, Dr. Friendly and his medical friend arrived; and coming to the bed and seeing all the judicious means which had been taken for the recovery of the patient:—"Every thing seems to have been done," said the latter, "that was most proper. Who is it that has understood so well what means to pursue?"

"That young gentleman," answered Dame Meadows;

Meadows; "it is he who has directed us all, and had the management of the whole."

The gentleman looked at Edward, and immediately recollected the intelligent countenance which had pleased him so much, when Edward was his auditor. But the generous boy was too much engrossed with watching the symptoms of returning life, to hear what passed. "Can you do nothing to facilitate his recovery?" asked Dr. Friendly, in a tone of great anxiety.

"This young gentleman has done so well," replied the other, "that I will not deprive him of the pleasure of effecting his friend's perfect restoration."

"No, Sir," said Edward, modestly, "when there was nobody here who knew what ought to be done, I was very glad to make use of the knowledge I had gained from attending to your conversation; but I should be very sorry to have poor Alfred's sufferings lengthened for a moment, for the sake of any applause that I should gain. Be so good then, Sir, to direct what should further be done."

"Whatever

"Whatever I may do, to perfect the cure, you have saved his life twice over," said the gentleman, laying his hand on Edward's shoulder, and looking at him with the warmest approbation. "But what is this?" cried he, immediately as he touched Edward's coat, "you are still in your wet clothes: my dear fellow, whilst you are saving one life, you are endangering another."

Dr. Friendly, now alarmed in an almost equal degree for the life of the little hero, that he had been for Alfred's, drew him from the bed, in spite of his entreaties to be allowed to stay till Alfred was further recovered, and hastened with him home, that the necessary precautions might be immediately used, to prevent his taking cold.

Alfred now, with the advantage of such skilful medical aid, began rapidly to recover. As soon as his doctor perceived that he was likely to be able to swallow, he poured by degrees a little warm brandy and water down his throat; and continuing the warm outward applications, together with frequently shaking

him

him, to hasten the circulation of the blood, it was not long before Alfred was pretty nearly himself again; who soon after sinking into a gentle sleep, was left to the care of one of the servants, whilst the rest of the attendants returned to the house, with minds filled with thankfulness for the happy termination of this alarming event: but no one felt it so strongly as the good Doctor, whose anxiety and terror could only be equalled by his gratitude and joy.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The Punishment.

THE next morning found Alfred entirely recovered, and his return to his companions was hailed with loud and repeated congratulations on his escape. On hearing the particulars, however, of all that had passed the day before, and remembering the ill-nature and passion which had led him into danger, he felt mortified and degraded, in the comparison of his own conduct with that of the generous and intrepid Edward, whom he was conscious he ought to love more than he felt himself capable of doing. "You see," said Thomas Goodly, who was ever ready to expatiate on the merits of his favourite, "Edward has made his word good; for he told you he would convince you he was not your enemy."

"I am certainly much obliged to him for having

having saved my life," replied Alfred, "but it is no proof that we are not enemies; for Edward would have done the same service that he has rendered me, to any person who stood in need of it, let them be who they would."

"I believe you are right," said Dr. Friendly, "and you only do Edward justice, when you give him credit for such a willingness to do good."

"Or to gain fame, perhaps," thought Alfred, (in whose mind prejudice still held too strong a place, to enable him to see Edward's conduct in its true colours.) "He ran no great risk of his own life, for he was too good a swimmer not to be able to save himself, if he found he could not save me; and he has secured to himself an abundant share of admiration and applause." Conscious, however, that he ought to check these suspicions, he asked Dr. Friendly to allow him to go and thank his deliverer, whom a slight cold made the Doctor think it necessary to confine to his bed for the day. The request was of course granted,

granted, and Alfred endeavoured to make his acknowledgments, in as handsome a manner as he possibly could; but Edward, to whom thanks were always painful, begged that he would not say any more about it, as he had only done what it was his duty to do; and changed the subject, by enquiring particularly about Alfred's bruises, which he feared were very serious, as he saw that he had got his right arm in a sling. Alfred assured him, however, that he did not feel any material injury from any part, excepting his hand, which had got sprained, he supposed, in his endeavours to catch at something to save himself, as he was falling into the water. Convinced that he ought to pay Edward every attention in his power, he spent most of the day by his bed-side; read to, and endeavoured to amuse him in every way he could think of; but it was more the act of principle, than the effect of that pleasing and animating glow, which is so honourable to a grateful and generous heart.

Edward was so perfectly well the next day, that

that Dr. Friendly thought it unnecessary to impose any longer confinement upon him. The congratulations with which Alfred had been met the morning before, were sincere and cordial, but they bore little comparison to those which welcomed the appearance of his generous preserver; and Edward saw, with pain, the strong inclination evinced by all, to draw comparisons between his conduct, and that of Alfred; and thinking it best to endeavour to turn off the affair as a joke—"Hush," said he, affecting a low voice, "do not talk so much about it, lest you should bring me into a scrape; for if Dr. Friendly knew all, I should perhaps be ordered back to my room, to enjoy the sweets of solitary confinement."

"What is that?" asked the Doctor, "what is Edward cautioning you about?"

The eager Thomas was about to reply, but Edward stopped him: "Nay, if it is to be told," said he, "I will at least have the merit of making the acknowledgment myself: you have been so good, Sir, as to praise me

for one part of my conduct, but you will have to punish me for another, for I was the first to disobey your orders, and go near the water."

"That was an act of disobedience," replied Dr. Friendly, "which, under any other circumstances, I should certainly have taken upon myself to punish; but as Alfred has proved in this instance, the greatest sufferer, I shall leave it to him to determine upon your punishment."

Alfred looked confused, and at a loss what to say, for he did not feel that cordial gratitude in his heart, which would naturally have led him to a warm acknowledgment of obligation; but Thomas, who would certainly have suffered a severe punishment, had he been obliged to remain silent when Edward was the subject of conversation, relieved him by his interference: "No, let me fix upon his punishment, for I have one in store that he deserves, for running to the water at the first going off."

"Do so," said Alfred, endeavouring to smile,

smile, "for I do not know of one severe enough."

"He shall read to you all the letter which he saved by going to the water side, and my answer," said Thomas.

"Come," said Edward, smiling, "let me have it then, for I think I can undergo that punishment, and be comfortable the rest of the day after it." Then, taking the letter, he read the following:—

To THOMAS GOODLY,

FROM HIS MOTHER,

With a present of Mrs. Wakefield's Sketches of Human Manners.

Accept, dear boy, a book of simple tales,
From which, I trust, some pleasure you will find;
Where useful truth, in Fancy's dress prevails,
Form'd to instruct and please the youthful mind.

Here different scenes and manners are pourtray'd,
But mark, dear boy, that man is still the same;
Whate'er the customs which you see display'd,
All-powerful Nature still her right will claim.

Mark in the savage negro's darken'd mind,
E'en there she acts her softest, gentlest part;
To a lov'd mother tender, good, and kind,
Who does not honour savage Abba's heart?

Whate'er the climate, whatsoe'er the place,
This truth omnipotent will still be found:—
Virtue, alone, esteem and love can raise,
In Afric's wilds, or Europe's polish'd ground.

What, though proud Dorus dar'd to slight her pow'r,
Tho' conquering Ali broke her gentle chain;
And though, in Fortune's proud, successful hour,
The rich Chinese her pleadings dar'd disdain:

Could lives like theirs in happiness compare
With Russia's peasants in their humble state?
Could they in noble Bernard's feelings share?
Or know what made the faithful Spaniard great?

These are the souls which Virtue proudly owns,
Whose worth transcends the conquering monarch's fame,
Whose inward peace for wealth and power atones,
Who must, from every breast affection claim.

And such, dear boy, of praise and fame be yours,
Let not aught else your youthful mind entice;
To her devote your earliest, latest powers,
For Virtue is the pearl of highest price.

"Now

"Now turn to the other side," said Thomas, with an arch smile, "and read my answer."

Edward complied, and read:—

Let Edward be the model for my youth,
And then, dear mother, I am sure to please:
The peasant's innocence, the Spaniard's truth,
And Bernard's generous spirit—*all* are *his*.

"There is more severity in this punishment than I expected," said he, returning the letter, with a deep blush, to its owner, who, however, was highly delighted with what he had done, particularly as he saw, by a smile on Dr. Friendly's countenance, that he was not displeased. And Thomas might have said with Cowper, that he had never thought himself

"So tuneful a poet before.'

CHAP. V.

The Robber.

IN consequence of Dr. Friendly's account of Alfred's accident, and Edward's praise-worthy conduct, the former's guardian came over to see him; nor could the father of the latter deny himself the pleasure of paying a visit to a son he was so justly proud of, and expressing in person his approbation of his laudable conduct, which, however, he took care to do in a manner that might strengthen his mind in good and generous principles, without making him too much elated with the praise which he acquired. "I need not tell you, my dear boy, that you have done what is right, for that, the approbation of your own mind must already have told you. But I can, from experience, assure you that such conduct is the surest way to obtain happiness, even in this world. Continue to make

make use of every opportunity of doing good and giving pleasure to others; and, whatever may be your fortune in the world, you will always enjoy the approbation of your own mind, and, consequently, be at peace with all mankind."

After these visits, Dr. Friendly and his young group returned to work with their usual regularity and industry, excepting that Alfred's hand was still too lame to allow him to make use of a pen; but he had always a ready assistant in the obliging Edward, whom, however, he was very unwilling to employ when not absolutely forced to it. He already felt the obligations which he lay under to him a painful burden, for, though sensible of their extent, he had not yet overcome his objection to acknowledging them. Besides, he had been so little accustomed to see people act from the pure impulse of generosity, that, though his own heart, if properly tutored, would itself have been capable of the most laudable motives, he could not help suspecting Edward of acting more from a

love

love of fame, and for the sake of acquiring power over his companions, than from a pure desire to do what was right. Edward does very generous and kind things, to be sure, he would say to himself; but then he always gets well paid for them in the applauses which he receives. If he had an opportunity of doing an act of kindness, without any one's knowing of it, I query whether he would be so ready then with his services. Should my translation prove better than his, and he be disappointed of the prize, which, I dare say, he expects, I wonder whether he will be as good-tempered as he is now, when every thing is in his favour. I hope my hand will be better before the time that the translations must be shown, or else I shall not be able to copy it over again, and I can never show it as it is at present. I dare say Edward would copy it for me, if I were to ask him, but I should not like to be so much obliged to him; besides, it would be a hint for him to improve his own by. Nor should I like to ask any of the other boys, for they would

would think it so strange that I did not employ Edward, when he begged that I would let him do all my writing for me. Thus did Alfred's suspicions of all Edward's actions lead him to be unjust both to himself and his friend, and poison his mind with a constant and painful jealousy.

One day, just after he had received a letter from his mother, informing him of the illness of his sister, to whom he was very much attached, (for Alfred had warm feelings, and was as capable of strong attachments as dislikes,) he happened to walk past Dame Meadows's garden, and was struck with the beauty of some uncommonly fine large cherries which hung quite ripe on a small tree. He had just been thinking that he should like to send some little present to his sister, and these cherries, he thought, would be quite the thing for his purpose, if he could persuade the Dame to sell them to him. On going, however, to apply, she told him that she could not let him have them, for she had already promised them to Master Loraine.

"But

"But if you will let me have them," said Alfred, "I will give you as much again for them as he has promised you."

"Perhaps so," replied the old woman, "for he is only to give me two shillings for them; but he should have them, if you would give four times as much. I am under great obligations to that young gentleman, for it was through his means that I got the situation I am in; and though other people may forget their obligations, it is no reason that I should not remember mine."

This was a severe and cutting reproof, and Alfred left the old woman without saying another word, more full than ever of dislike to Edward, and feeling the greatest resentment towards the person who had thus presumed to reprove him.

As people are generally most inclined to be out of humour with others when displeased with themselves, and particularly with those whom they are conscious of having injured, Alfred was more than usually disposed to quarrel with all around him, whilst poor Edward

Edward was more particularly the object of his ill-nature; and the repeated exclamations from the other boys, who saw his behaviour, of—"Oh, how can you behave so to Edward?" "Oh, fie, to forget your obligations so soon!" only served to increase his spleen, by making him sensible of his own inferiority. He heard with pleasure the summons to bed, when the time for retiring arrived, although Dr. Friendly had been taking great pains to amuse them, and had succeeded with all the rest; but Alfred, little disposed to be pleased with any thing that was going forward, was glad of an excuse to wrap himself up in sullen silence, though he found he could not sleep. Edward and the others who slept in the room with him were soon sunk in forgetfulness; but he, imagining he had cause of displeasure against others, though in fact the fault was in himself only, lay tossing and tumbling about for some time. At length, fancying he should be more likely to sleep if he walked a few times backward and forward in the room, he got up for that purpose. It

was

was a beautifully clear moon-light night, and he stood for some time looking out of the window. Dame Meadows's cottage and garden were just perceivable, and Alfred almost imagined that he saw the cherries as they hung so temptingly on the tree. "If I had but a few of them," thought he, "supposing it were only a dozen, how glad I should be to send them to poor Mary. I could very easily get them, for it is only a step out of this window on to the top of the door, from which I could soon slide down one of the pillars. But then it would be stealing, and if I were found out, how mean and disgraceful it would look. But who can find me out? The boys are all asleep, and I could pack them up in the box which I am sending off to-morrow, without any body knowing the least about them. It will be a disappointment, to be sure, to the old Dame, but I can give her three times their value in money to make up for it, and she deserves some punishment for the manner she treated me to-day." With such arguments as these passing through

his

his mind, Alfred unfastened the window very gently and raised the sash, after which he stood some time to see if he had disturbed any one by the movement, but all was still and quiet. He then slipped on a few of his clothes, and, stepping out upon the lead which was over the door, slid down the pillar which supported it; and was on the ground in an instant. Afraid of staying to allow himself time to think of what he was about, he ran with speed to the old woman's garden. Here he stopped to look at the windows and door, to make himself sure that the owner was in bed; and being satisfied at length that all was quiet, he stepped over the rails, and was just raising his hand to the tree, when he heard his own name pronounced in a soft voice. The sound made him start as much as though he had heard the roar of a lion, and looking round, he beheld Edward standing close to the rails, who had been wakened by some noise which Alfred had made in getting out of the window. Supposing it robbers about the house, yet desirous of being quite

sure, before he gave the alarm, he went to look out of the window, where he saw Alfred sliding down one of the pillars, and suspecting immediately what was his object, he determined to follow, and prevent his committing an action, of which, he was sure, a very little reflection would make him repent. As Edward, however, had to stop to get some clothes on before he could go after him, Alfred would have been in possession of the cherries before his friend could have prevented him, had he not spent so much time in examining the cottage before he ventured into the garden.

"Come here, Alfred," said Edward, in a gentle voice, "and do not commit an action so unworthy of you. I know you wished for the cherries for your sister, not yourself; but wait till to-morrow morning, and you will find that you can get them in a manner much more to your satisfaction than this."

"Yes," replied Alfred, "by being obliged to you for them, I suppose; but I am already sufficiently

sufficiently burdened with my obligations to you."

"No, you shall not be obliged to me for them: you shall find them within your reach before I am out of my room. And now let us make haste back, lest we should be missed by any of the boys."

"It is of little consequence to me now, whether they know or not," said Alfred, who foresaw an account of the whole affair given in the morning, by Edward, to Dr. Friendly. There was little more passed between them; they walked silently along, Edward unwilling to speak, for fear of hurting Alfred's feelings, and Alfred himself too sullen to break the silence. They got back to their own room, and the window closed again, without any of the other sleepers being at all conscious of what had been going forward, and were soon laid once more on their pillows; Edward to be very soon wrapped again in sleep, and Alfred to suffer under an increased disturbance of mind.

CHAP. VI.

The Prize.

ALFRED had scarcely finished dressing himself the next morning, when a servant came into the room, to tell him that Dame Meadows wished to speak to him. He obeyed the summons with great reluctance; for, with the good old Dame, were many unpleasant ideas associated in his mind. He went down stairs, however, and found that she was come to offer him one half of the produce of her cherry-tree, if he still wished to have them; "for," said she, "Master Edward only chose to have half of them, so I thought I would bring the rest to you this morning, that you might have the next offer." Alfred could not but suspect (what was indeed the case) that Edward, having heard from the Dame that he had applied for the cherries, had kindly left one half of them for him,

him, and desired the Dame to bring them, without mentioning his name in the business. Delighted at the thought of at length being in possession of the wished-for fruit, he took two shillings from his pocket, and offered them as a payment. "No, Sir," said the good woman, "one shilling is what Master Edward has paid, and I will have no more from you."

"But, you know, I promised you as much again as he gave," said Alfred, "so you have a right to the two."

"Oh no, Sir," replied she, "that would be taking an unfair advantage, and I should not expect either pleasure or profit from what I got so dishonestly." Alfred again felt the force of the old woman's reproof, though in this instance it was an unconscious one; and giving her the shilling, he returned to his room with his treasure. "Now let us set about getting them packed off," said Edward to him as he entered the room, desirous of diverting his mind from the painful reflections which, he was sure, were crowding upon it.

"Come, and I will help you; and we shall get the box packed up and ready to send off by the time the breakfast-bell rings. Here, do you be writing the direction and preparing the cord, whilst I am packing the cherries. I hope your sister will get them before they lose any of their beauty, and the very sight of them will almost be enough to make her well."

They had just finished their business when the bell summoned them down stairs; and Alfred, who had not a doubt but Edward would make a discovery, in some way or other, of the transactions of the preceding night, was in constant expectation, all the day, of the whole affair coming out. But not a word or look of Edward's betrayed the least inclination of the kind, nor had he the slightest appearance of having any thing upon his mind that he wished to discover. He was even more attentive to Alfred than usual; and showed, by endeavouring to engage him in any thing that was likely to amuse him, when he was not busy with his lessons, a

desire

desire of leading him from the contemplation of what was likely to give pain. "How kind, how generous he is," thought Alfred, as he observed these marks of Edward's kindness: "this, at least, is free from either ostentation or pride: it cannot be from any wish to please, for no one knows of the circumstances but myself, and he has little reason to expect that I will make his merits more public. I wish I could repay him for his goodness, and show myself sensible of it. But I have no way of doing so but by exposing myself; and to lay myself open to the contempt and scorn of the whole school is impossible." As he sat, thus engrossed with thought, he kept turning over some loose papers which lay near him, amongst which was the rough copy of his translation. "Edward shall have the prize, however," said he to himself: "I will not appear in the lists against him, and there is little doubt of his excelling all the other competitors. This paper shall have no further attention, and, for once, I will imitate his example, and do

him

him a kindness without his knowing it." With this determination, he threw the paper from him, and, at the same moment, Thomas Goodly came up, and asked him to go and assist Edward, himself, and some others, in erecting their little theatre. "We wish to have it ready on the day that the prize is given; and whoever has the best translation, is to be made the manager of it, and to judge what pieces are to be performed, and who is to act in them. I hope," added he, seeming to recollect that Alfred had not hitherto shown much more kindness to him than to his friend Edward, "I hope, Alfred, if you get it, you will let me be one of the performers."

"I shall not get it," replied Alfred, "for I do not mean to try."

"Not try!" exclaimed Thomas; "why you have your translation already written, I know."

"Yes," returned Alfred; "but my hand is not well enough for me to copy it over again, and I cannot offer it as it is."

"But any body will copy it for you, I

am

am sure. I cannot write well enough, or else I would beg you to let me do it; but Edward, I am sure, will be quite as willing, even though he knew yours to be better than his own."

"Perhaps so," returned Alfred, "but I do not choose he should copy it."

Thomas, who had seen so many instances of Alfred's suspicions of his favourite, concluded that he was afraid of Edward's taking advantage of seeing his translation to improve his own by, and that he would rather withhold it altogether, than his rival should be benefited by it; and, thinking that he deserved to suffer from such evil thoughts, took no further pains to persuade him to change his resolution, but rejoiced, most heartily, that Edward was now sure to get a prize he so justly deserved; for Thomas did not recollect that it was a reward for the best Latin scholar, not for the best boy, and, as the former, Alfred was undoubtedly Edward's superior. It was not long before he called Edward aside to tell him the news, which he did

did with an air of no small exultation. His auditor, however, expressed no such delight: "I am sure," said he, "whoever may get the prize, Alfred will deserve it," and returned to his work.

As Alfred and Edward were employed together, even Thomas could not but notice the difference in the former's behaviour: he no longer seemed anxious to put unfavourable interpretations on Edward's words and actions; and though he maintained his own opinion with as much, if not with greater firmness than formerly, from a fear of being thought by Edward to wish to bribe him to silence, he expressed it with mildness, and was always ready to allow Edward his share of praise. Such is the happy effect of kind dispositions towards others, that they sooth and tranquillize the mind, and make it in better humour with itself. Nor was his satisfaction a little increased, when, a few hours after, being near Edward, he saw him, by accident, pull out a piece of paper from his pocket; and though it was taken up again as hastily

hastily as possible, and with an evident desire to prevent his seeing what it was, Alfred was persuaded, from the slight glance he got, that it was the copy of his translation, which he remembered to have thrown away. On going to look for it, he found it was no longer to be found: "He has taken it to compare with his own," thought he, "that he may make his more correct. I am glad of it, for I shall thus, for once, have the pleasure of being of service to him. I will not take any notice of having lost my paper, and nobody else need to know it. Pleased with himself, for the motives which led to this determination, Alfred went to bed with a much more tranquil mind than he had for a long time before been in possession of.

The day arrived on which the prize was to be decided; and each candidate having been desired to leave his translation, signed with his name, in Dr. Friendly's study, the preceding evening, when a party of gentlemen were to meet to decide an affair in which the Doctor did not choose to trust to his own judgment,

judgment, from a fear of being suspected, at least, of partiality; his entrance into the school-room was looked for with impatience. At length he arrived, and every eye was fixed upon him, with a look of enquiry: "The prize is Alfred Granby's," said he; "adjudged to him without a dissenting voice." Alfred was astonished! "There must be some mistake, Sir," said he; "for I did not give any translation in."—"This, however, is signed with your name," replied the Doctor: "look at it, and see whether you know any thing of it or not." Alfred looked at it, and saw, with a glance, that it was indeed his own. "Yes, Sir, it is mine; but I neither wrote this copy, nor commissioned any one to do it for me."—"This must be enquired into," said the Doctor, with an assumed look of gravity: "it must be found out who dares to forge your name."

"There is only one in the school who can be suspected," replied Alfred: "This, I believe, Sir, will prove to be the culprit," added

added he, laying his hand on Edward's shoulder.

"It is not Edward's hand-writing," returned Dr. Friendly; "I need not ask you, therefore," added he, turning to Edward, "if it be your doing." Edward endeavoured to conceal a blush which he felt colouring his cheek, and answered, with as indifferent a voice as possible, "The hand-writing, Sir, is a sufficient proof."

"It is so," answered Dr. Friendly: "it proves it is not your doing, nor do I know the hand to be that of any other boy in the school."

"Will you give me leave to look at it, Sir?" said Thomas Goodly, coming forward with his usual eagerness. The Doctor put the paper into his hand; when, pulling another out of his pocket, Thomas seemed to examine them both very attentively. "Yes, it is! it is his doing! Look, Sir," cried he, "this is a piece of paper that Edward gave me the other night to set fire to the oxygen gas with, that we had been making. But as I saw he

had been practising different kinds of writing on it, I had a suspicion that he had something or other particular in his head, and therefore did not make use of it, but kept it on purpose; and, you see, most of the writing is the same as your paper."

"There can be no doubt of it," replied Dr. Friendly, "and Edward Loraine is once more convicted of a misdemeanor; for which I again nominate Alfred Granby to pass sentence upon him."

"That I will do with great pleasure," cried Alfred, whose mind was now very differently disposed towards Edward, than when last called upon to perform such an office; "he must, if you please, Sir, receive the prize he would so generously have given me: and receive too, in the presence of the whole school, my thanks and acknowledgments for his noble conduct, for this is not the only kindness he has done me in secret." Here Alfred related, with animated warmth, the story of the cherries. When he had finished—"Nobody, I am sure," said he, "will object

ject to his being presented with the elegant copy of *Adam's Roman Antiquities*, which has been provided as the prize for the best Latin scholar; for though I may write the best rough copy, he has given it a beauty that I should never have thought of." As Alfred finished speaking, he came forward and offered the book to the blushing Edward, who however refused to take it: "No," said he, "I have no right to this prize; it was to be given for the best translation, which yours was decided to be."

"But mine would never have been seen, had you not offered it for inspection; you must therefore stand by the consequences," returned Alfred, "and be assured, it is the greatest pleasure I can enjoy, to give this proof of the change in my sentiments, and of my determination to endeavour, in future, to copy your virtues, as faithfully as you have copied my translation." And again he offered the book; which Edward was again preparing to refuse, when Dr. Friendly interposed to decide the dispute.

"I believe, Alfred," said he, "Edward is right; the prize is for the best Latin scholar, and therefore undoubtedly yours. But as a satisfaction to your mind, I propose, that each of us contribute such a sum of money as we can afford, with which we will purchase a medal, which shall be engraved with a motto expressive of our esteem and affection, and presented to Edward, as a memento of his praise-worthy conduct; and it will prove a stimulus, I hope, for others to follow so amiable an example." A general shout evinced the universal approbation which this proposal met with, and Dr. Friendly continued;—"I have not been an unobserving spectator of what was going on amongst you; but I thought it best to leave you to yourselves, for I was persuaded, with Alfred's good sense, Edward's conduct could not fail of its effect."

"Yes," said Alfred, with a smile of pleasure, "when constant dropping will hollow the hardest rocks, it would have been strange indeed if such a continuation of kind actions had not softened even my obstinate disposition."

"Give

"Give me leave to say, however, my dear Alfred," said Dr. Friendly, "that had the prize been for the greatest improvement in disposition and behaviour, it would undoubtedly have been yours; and the success with which this first attempt at self-improvement has been attended, is a fair promise, that Edward will soon have a formidable rival in the affections of his school-fellows."

"It shall be a rivalship, however, without enmity," said Alfred, taking Edward's hand, whose heart was too full to allow him to speak. "Edward has many friends, who, without loving him less, will, I hope, learn to love me more. They have great reason at present to dislike me, but I will endeavour in future to take Edward's method of overcoming their aversion; and if I come any way near the pattern, I am sure I cannot fail of success."

END OF THE FIRST TALE.

The Ghost.

CHAP. I.—*The Cousins.*

"OH, how tired I am of having nothing to do, and nobody to play with," exclaimed George Hardy to a servant in the room, and throwing himself back on his chair, with a loud yawn: "I thought the Easter holidays would never come, and now that I have only been at home three days, I begin to wish they were over. I wonder when my cousin Henry will come; for if he be any thing of a clever fellow, I shall be better off when I get him to play with. He was to have spent all the Easter week with me, and now it is Monday afternoon, and he is not come yet." As George finished speaking, he heard the sound of horses' feet, and starting up and running to the window, he perceived his expected guest, whom he had time to view as he dismounted from

from a little poney on which he had rode, and waited to give it to the servant. Henry was between thirteen and fourteen years of age, and a few months younger than George; but his manly figure and intelligent countenance, made him appear older than he really was; and George surveyed him with perfect satisfaction, convinced, that in condescending to associate with him, he should not in any degree let down his own dignity. "I am very glad to see you," said he to Henry, who now entered the room: "I thought you would never come; for I have been almost moped to death since I came home."

"How long have you been from school?" enquired Henry.

"Oh, only since Friday; but papa and mamma are not at home, and three days seem a long time to be alone."

"But you have not been quite alone, I think," said his cousin, looking at the same time towards a little boy who sat at a corner window, without seeming to dare to turn his eyes to the other part of the room.

"Oh,

"Oh, I do not reckon Charles any body," replied George, in a contemptuous tone; such a little fellow as he is can be no company for me, you know." Henry did not assent to this remark, though he did not attempt to contradict it; but his silence rather led George to feel some doubt of the spirit of his new companion.

George was the only son of a gentleman and lady, who were what is generally understood by the term fashionable people; that is, their time was engaged from one week's end to another, in a round of dissipation, which left them little opportunity to attend to any other object. Fortunately for them, their family was small, so that, seeing their son placed at a fashionable school, and having him home always at the holidays, when he was allowed to go and do just as he pleased, which they considered the greatest indulgence that they could give, was all that they thought necessary for them to do, till he was old enough to be removed to Eton, or some other higher seminary. George was a boy of good dispositions, but possessing a great

a great flow of spirits; and never having been taught to keep them under any regulation, he was in the habit of seeking amusement without always considering that it was sometimes paid for by others, at too high a price. He had been early taught to despise every thing weak or childish; so that poor Charles had, from their first acquaintance, been to him an object of the most perfect contempt.

Charles had been left, when quite an infant, in the charge of his grandmother, who being old and infirm, was obliged, consequently, to leave him almost entirely to the care of the servants, whose darling he was, till, at her death, he became a ward of Mr. Hardy's. This gentleman, however, who had so little time to bestow upon the education of his own son, could not be expected to pay much attention to the child of his friend; but thought that he had done all that was necessary, when, on the death of the old lady, he went and brought Charles in his own carriage, and placed him in the same school with his son. "I have brought you a new

a new play-fellow," said he to George, as he introduced Charles to him.

"A play-*thing*, more likely, I think," replied his son, (looking at Charles, who was two years younger than himself, and very small of his age,) with an air of great self-importance.

"That is right, my boy," said Mr. Hardy, laughing, "keep up your own consequence, and be a man as soon as possible, and then you will be a companion for me, instead of this little creature."

"And I shall be a man too, some time," said Charles, with great simplicity; and stretching himself up, to look as tall as possible.

"Yes, *some time*, I hope," repeated George, contemptuously, "but it will be a long time first, I suspect."

"Well, I must be gone," exclaimed Mr. Hardy, starting up, as if he had just recollected something of importance: "Good bye, George, till I see you again."

"And when will that be, papa?" asked his

his son, holding him by the arm to prevent his going before he gave him an answer.

"Your mamma says you had better not come home again before the long holidays; for we are to be away at Easter, so that you will be better at school."

"Oh no, papa; do let me come home at Easter: I want so to see the new plantation, and all the alterations you have been making; and you know I can do very well, though mamma and you are not at home, for I am not such a child now, you know, papa.

"True, my boy," replied his father, "you have more sense than falls to the share of many a man, and may be trusted by yourself very well. You shall come home, therefore, and little Charles there must come with you, and I will try to get leave for your cousin Henry to spend the week with you, when you will do very well, and be very happy, I am sure; so, good bye, my boy." George now took leave of his father, much pleased with this regulation; for though he did not know much of his cousin Henry, as they had always

always lived at a considerable distance from each other, yet, what he did know was exceedingly pleasant, and he had no doubt of their being very good companions. Henry had long been a visit in George's debt, the payment of which had often been solicited; but Henry's father and mother, who did not approve altogether of the manner in which their nephew was brought up, were not very desirous of encouraging an intimacy between the two boys, whilst they thought their son young and inexperienced enough to be biassed by George's example. On receiving Mr. Hardy's invitation, however, for the Easter week, they were persuaded that Henry was now of an age to judge, in some degree, for himself; and desirous rather of giving him an opportunity of doing so for a short time, as well as unwilling to give any more refusals, they consented to his spending this week at Mr. Hardy's seat, near Dartmouth in Devonshire, where, at the beginning of the chapter, we had just introduced him.

CHAP. II.

The Archers.

"CAN you shoot well with a bow and arrow, Henry?" said George, as they finished breakfast the morning after Henry's arrival.

"Tolerably well, I believe," replied Henry: "I am a good deal improved since we played together at our house."

"Let us have a trial of skill then," said George, running to a closet and taking out a very handsome bow, and hastening down stairs on his way to the garden.

"With all my heart," said Henry; but just as he was leaving the room, he happened to turn and see that Charles sat still, without appearing to intend following them. "Will not you go with us, Charles?" said he, stopping and turning with a friendly look to the little boy.

"No," replied Charles, "I have not any

arrows to my bow; besides, I am a very bad shooter, and I know George will not let me shoot with him."

"Oh, try him, I dare say I shall be able to persuade him; and I will lend you my arrows, for I brought two sets with me."

"What are you staying for," cried George, coming back, impatient at Henry's delay.

"I am waiting for Charles," replied his cousin.

"Phoo, nonsense, you surely would not think of plaguing yourself with such a little useless fellow as he is: he cannot shoot at all."

"Let him do his best, however," said Henry, "it will be an amusement to him to try."

"Yes, but what amusement will it be to us to look on?"

"But we can teach him, you know," replied Henry, "and I dare say he will soon be able to pierce the bull's eye," added he, good-temperedly; and taking Charles by the hand, he led him forward, whilst Charles

looked with timid diffidence at George, scarcely daring to follow whither he was led.

"If you can find any pleasure in teaching a dunce, it is more than I can," said George: "I was not designed for a school-master, so I will not attempt to deprive you of any of the gratification."

"How do you know he is a dunce? I dare say you never tried him."

"Not I, indeed; nor do I believe I ever shall. But I suppose I need not be very particular about hitting the mark, for I shall not have any very formidable rivals, I suspect, or else you would never think of poor little Charles shooting with us." As George spoke, he drew his string rather carelessly, and let his arrow fly, which did not come within some inches of the mark.

"Now, Charles, take courage," said Henry, "you see George has not made a shot that is very discouraging."

The timid Charles took his aim, but his hand trembled, and he did not let his string

go

go with sufficient quickness: his arrow rested about an inch short of George's.

"Not so much amiss, however," said Henry, examining the arrow; "and you will do better the next time, for you were afraid this; and, you know, there is not any occasion for you to be afraid, though you should not come within two or three inches of us, for you are much younger, and it is a long shot. He then began to give Charles some directions about his manner of standing and taking his aim; till George, quite out of patience, exclaimed, "Pray, Henry, keep your lessons for another time, for it spoils the sport to have so much time spent between the shots." Henry now took his aim, which came considerably within George's. This gave George a little more spirit; and he did not let his second arrow fly without a good deal more care and attention, which proved to be a much better aim. Charles, too, exerted more courage in his second attempt, and his arrow pitched close to George's first.

"Bravo, my boy," exclaimed George, as

he saw it fix upon the tree at which they shot: poor little Charles has something like life in him, after all."

"He has a good deal, I think," said Henry, "to make so good an aim, after you had discouraged him so."

Henry now drew his bow, and came within the line of the mark. "These arrows are yours," said George, presenting Henry with a quiver of new arrows, which his father had left for them to shoot for.

"No," replied Henry, "Charles has done by far the best for them, and he has the best right to them."

"Oh no," said Charles, with warmth, "indeed I will not take them from you, Henry; for if it had not been for you, I should never have tried to shoot at all."

"No, no," said George, "you must have the new arrows; but as Charles has not any, you can, if you like, give him your old ones." To this, Henry readily agreed; and on receiving them, Charles said, "I will never

never rest till they shoot as well with me as they did with you."

"This lad might be made something of," said George, putting his arm through Henry's, and leading him away, "if he were not such a poor frightened thing."

"But frightening him more, is not the way to make him get the better of his fears."

"Oh, yes; it ought to make him ashamed of them, for it is contemptible to see him shrink and tremble at every trifle."

"It would be better, I believe, to try to convince him that there is no occasion to be afraid."

"Oh, there would be no end to reasoning, and preaching, and proving to him, constantly. The only way will be, to make him completely ashamed of himself at once; for," added he, lowering his voice to prevent Charles, who followed close behind, from hearing what he said, "do you know, he even believes in ghosts and witches."

"That is a great pity," replied Henry; "but,

"but, I hope, as he grows older, he will get more sense."

"I doubt it," returned George, "as he seems to have been thoroughly grounded in it by his grandmother's old servants."

The boys had now got beyond Mr. Hardy's grounds, and rambled towards the beach, where they stood for some time watching the fishermen, who were drawing up their nets. One of the men threw a large flat-fish on the sand, close to where Charles stood, who was upon the point of stooping to take it up to look at it, when George exclaimed, "Do not touch that fish, Charles, for it is bewitched." Poor Charles shrunk back with a look of horror. "Nonsense," said Henry, going towards the fish, "do not mind what George says, Charles; he is only making a jest of you." Charles, who felt convinced, from Henry's kindness to him, that he would not deceive him, stooped to take up the fish.

"Well, remember, I give you warning," said George, "and take my word for it, you had better not touch it." Charles, however,

in

in spite of his remonstrance, laid his hand upon the head of the fish, but instantly gave a start, and sprang, with terror, to a great distance. George, highly amused at the alarm expressed in Charles's pale and distorted countenance, stood laughing at his fright.

"What is the matter?" asked Henry, going to him: "what did it do to you?" Charles stood trembling and unable to speak. "You had better try yourself," said George, "and then you will be better able to understand Charles's fears."

"Oh no," said Charles, grasping Henry's arm, "do not touch it: do not go near it. Let us get away as fast as we can."

"Nay," replied Henry, "I must know what there is so very terrible in this fish," and going to it, and viewing it all round, "I see nothing particular about it," added he, taking hold of its head, to turn it over. The moment he touched it, however, his hand almost involuntarily started back. "Now," said George, still laughing, "I hope

hope you are convinced that witches are not to be disturbed by every boy that chooses to indulge his curiosity."

"Oh no," said Charles, with a look of great solemnity, "they do not choose to be disturbed."

"Surely you do not suppose that there are such things as witches, Charles," said Henry, "or that they have any thing to do with this fish."

"To be sure," interrupted George: "is he not obliged to believe, when he has had such a proof?"

"Yes," added Charles, who had no doubt that George believed as firmly as he did himself: "and is it not as likely that witches should be in fishes as in cats?"

"In cats!" exclaimed Henry.

"Yes," replied Charles; "Thrifty, our old housekeeper, once rubbed her hand against something in the dark that felt like a cat's back, and directly she saw a great many sparks of fire; and when she screamed out, and one of the servants came with a light,

something

something ran past them in the shape of a cat."

"Very probably," said Henry, smiling at poor Charles's credulity, "for nothing is more likely to resemble a cat than one of its own species; and I know, that when a cat's back is rubbed the wrong way, sparks, which are electric sparks, may be seen in the dark."

"Phoo, nonsense!" cried George, as soon as he could speak for laughing, which, however, he had concealed under a tolerably serious countenance; "do not talk to Charles about electric sparks: what does he know about them, I wonder?"

"That is no reason why he should never know any thing about them," said Henry.

"Not if you could make him understand what you were talking about; but that will not be easily done. He understands far more about ghosts and witches, than electricity."

"But he would understand the one, as well as the other, if there had been equal pains taken to teach him. I hope, however, I shall

I shall soon be able to convince him, that he does not need to be afraid of this fish." As he spoke, he again stooped to the fish, which was now nearly dead. Charles, seeing him about to touch it, screamed out, with a voice of extreme terror, "Oh, Henry, do not touch it again!"

"I must know what it was that caused the strange sensation in my hand," said Henry, calmly, and at the same time stooped to take hold of the fish's head. But again his hand started away, and he felt the shock through his whole body.

"Now," said Charles, venturing to come a little nearer, and looking at him with an expression of great anxiety, "I hope you are satisfied that this fish is not to be sported with."

"Yes," said George, "I hope the witch has proved, at last, that it will not submit to be insulted with your curiosity."

"I must know what this means," said Henry, "for the sensation was exactly like an electric shock."

"What,

"What! more electricity," exclaimed George.

"Yes," replied Henry, "I know there are some fishes that have the power of giving an electric shock, and I am persuaded that this must be one of them."

"Come, come, Charles," said George, "let you and me be off, before Henry persuades us out of all the knowledge that we have had from such old and experienced people." So saying, he took hold of Charles's arm, to lead him away, who, before he went, begged several times of Henry, to promise not to touch the fish again.

"It is dead now," said Henry, taking it up and holding it towards Charles; "and it does not give any shock now, so that you may take hold of it with perfect safety."

"Oh no," said Charles, shrinking, "indeed, I would not touch it again for the world."

"Nay, surely, you are not afraid of it now," remonstrated Henry; "you see it is quite dead."

"But if you torment the spirit out of it, who knows where it may go to next?" said Charles, "perhaps it may come to torment us in return."

"True, my boy," said George, with a mixed look of archness and gravity, "tit for tat is fair play, you know, so let us keep out of the scrape." Charles, now hopeless of convincing Henry of his danger, yet unwilling to leave him in it, followed George with reluctant steps; whilst Henry staid to examine the fish which had given so much alarm, more particularly, before he followed his companions. As soon as he got into the house, he hastened immediately to Mr. Hardy's library, in search of some book which would give an account of the kind of fish which he had often heard of, that possessed the power of giving an electric shock; and at length, after much fruitless search, which did not, however, discourage him, he was rewarded for his trouble. "I have found it!" cried he, hastening into the room where George

and

and Charles were, "I have found it out at last!"

"What have you found?" asked George: "nothing, I hope, that we need to attend to before we get our dinner, for I believe it is just coming to the table; and I would rather find it than any thing else at present."

"No," said Henry, "it will serve to amuse us when the candles come, for they will follow soon after we have satisfied our hunger." So saying, he laid down his book, with great good humour, though so much interested in the subject; for Henry had early learned to accommodate himself to others, and to give up his own wishes, when he found them in opposition to those of his companions.

CHAP. III.

The Ray.

"I THINK," said Charles, who had ventured, now and then, to speak, since Henry had so kindly encouraged him, "it is almost time for candles, and then we shall hear what it was that you found out just before dinner, Henry." The proposal being agreed to, the candles were brought, and the shutters closed, when Henry, taking up his book again—"Now, Charles," said he, "I will read you an account of a fish, as curious as that which you saw this morning."

"I am glad of that," said Charles, drawing his chair close to Henry's, with a look of great attention; "for I like to hear of such strange things."

"Yes," said George, smiling, "you like better to *hear* of them, than to see them: do not you, Charles?"

"Because, you know," replied Charles, with

with great simplicity, "it can do one no harm only to hear of them."

"No," said Henry, "it will do you good, I hope, instead of harm."

"Whilst you are giving your philosophical lecture," returned George, "I will go and amuse myself another way; for I know all that you are going to read already."

"Then you might have saved me a great deal of trouble," returned Henry, "by telling me of it, instead of leaving me to find it out."

"But I should have lost a great deal of sport myself," said George, as he left the room, "and, *be merry when you can*, is my maxim."

Henry then opened his book, which was that useful and entertaining work, *Bingley's Animal Biography*, from which he read the following account of

THE ELECTRIC RAY.

"We have selected the Torpedo, or Electric Ray, from the rest of the genus, since no

accounts of the other species have been preserved, that are deserving of much attention: their general habits and manners being, as far as we know, nearly the same, and similar to what we have stated in the description of the genus.

"The present species is, however, so remarkable, as to merit very particular notice. It is found in many of the European seas; and the fishermen often discover it in Torbay, and sometimes of such a size as to weigh nearly eighty pounds."

On hearing Torbay mentioned, Charles interrupted Henry, "Why that," exclaimed he, "is the very place where we were this morning!"

"It is so," replied Henry, smiling; "and, I think, you seem as though you would make the same discovery that I did."

"I wish I may, but I do not think it is likely, for I am not half so clever as you."

"But you can understand what I read, as well as I do myself."

"When there are no very hard words I can

can understand well enough, and there have not been any yet that I did not know the meaning of."

"When there are any, however, that you feel at a loss about, you must say so. If I know them myself I will tell you; and if not, we can look in the dictionary. But let us go on with the account of the fish, before we forget what we have read."

"The head and body are distinct from each other, and nearly of a circular form, two or three inches thick in the middle, attenuating to extreme thinness on the edges."

"I do not know what *attenuating* means," said Charles.

"It means lessening down to, or growing gradually thinner," replied Henry: "do not you remember that the fish we saw this morning was thick in the middle, and that it grew gradually thinner, till it was quite thin at the edges?" Charles agreed that it was so, and Henry then continued.

"The skin is smooth, of a dusky brown above, and white underneath. The ventral fins

fins form on each side, at the end of the body, nearly a quarter of a circle. The tail is short, and the two dorsal fins are placed near its origin. The mouth is small, and, as in the other species, there are, on each side, below it, five breathing apertures."

"Do they not breathe through their nostrils, like other animals?" asked Charles.

"No," replied Henry; "fishes have not holes in their noses, as we have: but their gills, which, you know, are just like red, fleshy combs, covered over with a large flap, which opens backward, answer the same purpose; for they take in mouthsful of water, which they send backwards through their gills, and in this manner receive or let out air. It shows what care has been taken to make them fit for the element which they were to live in; for if they had had nostrils, they would have admitted more water into their bodies, than could make its escape again; or, if the flaps of the gills had opened forward, instead of backward, they would have

have kept opening continually as they swam along, and prevented their getting forward."

"Dear me," said Charles, "I did not think there had been so much contrivance in the make of fishes, for I always thought they were very stupid-looking things."

"I do not believe," replied Henry, "we should think any animals either stupid or ugly, if we were better acquainted with their natures. My papa used often to tell me, when he wished me to read books of natural history, that the more I knew of it, the more I should admire and love the Great Power who made every thing; and, I am sure, though I know so very little yet, I have found it so already. But I had almost forgot that I was reading." He then continued.

"The Electric Rays are partial to sandy bottoms, in about forty fathoms of water, where they often bury themselves, by flinging the sand over them by a quick flapping of all the extremities. In Torbay they are generally taken, like other flat-fish, with the trawl-

trawl-net, and instances have occurred of their seizing a bait. This fish possesses the same property of benumbing its prey, as that which we have before described in the Electric Eel; and, when it is in health and vigour, the shock that it communicates is often very severe; but its powers always decline, as the animal declines in strength, and when it expires they entirely cease. In winter these are at much less formidable than during warm weather."

"What kind of a shock is it that it gives?" asked Charles.

"An electric shock; and just such a sensation as you felt this morning, when you took hold of the fish's head," replied Henry.

"Oh, now I think I have found you out!" said Charles; "that was an Electric Ray which we saw: do not you think it was?"

"Yes, I have no doubt of it," returned Henry; "and that is what I meant you to find out. I hope now you will give up all idea of witches having any thing to do with it."

"Yes,

"Yes, I am convinced now that you were right; and I wish George would come, that he too might see that he was mistaken."

"George knew very well what it was," replied Henry; "but he had a mind to tease you a little."

"He was not so kind as you are," said Charles, looking gratefully in Henry's face; who again resumed the description of the elelectric ray.

"Dr. Ingenhouz had a torpedo for some time in a tub of sea-water, which, during winter, seemed to be feeble. On taking it into his hands, and pressing it on each side of the head, a sudden tremor, which lasted for two or three seconds, passed into his fingers, but extended no further. After a few seconds the same trembling was felt again, and again several times, after different intervals. 'The sensation was,' he says, 'the same that he should have felt by the discharge of several very small electrical bottles, one after another, into his hand.'"

Henry stopped here, thinking that this was

as

as much as Charles was likely to be able to understand. "I wonder," said Charles, as Henry closed the book, "what can be the reason of their possessing this extraordinary property."

"It is, I believe," replied Henry, "for the purpose of enabling them to catch their prey. There is an electrical eel too, that I have read of in *Stedman's Voyage to Surinam*, which is capable of giving still stronger shocks; and as it has not any teeth, it is necessary for it to be able, in this manner, to benumb the fish on which it has to feed, or else it would have no chance of catching them: perhaps it may be the same with the electric ray. At any rate, there is, no doubt, some good reason for its being able to throw out such a sting as it did this morning."

"But it is not such a sting as bees and gnats give, I think," said Charles, "for it did not leave any soreness behind."

"No," replied Henry, "I ought not to have called it a sting, for it is only the effect of

of the electric fluid passing through the body."

"I do not understand that," said Charles, with great simplicity.

"You, perhaps, never heard any thing about electricity; nor ever saw an electric machine?"

"No, never."

"I wish I had one here then to show you, for it is very curious, and I am afraid I shall not be able to give you much idea of electricity without one. I know, however, in *Scientific Dialogues*, it says, that electricity is a fluid which is contained in all substances, and when the proper means are taken, it is as easily collected from the surrounding objects, as water itself; and when seen in the dark, it emits beautiful bright sparks."

"I should like to see them," said Charles.

"I wish I had a machine to show you the effects of electricity; for I could soon give you as good a shock, as the bewitched ray did this morning. But I suppose you would rather see the curious effect it has upon

things that have not so much feeling as your body; such as its ringing bells, or making little paper dolls dance about on a pewter plate, and a great many other curious things of that kind."

"Have you ever seen it do such things."

"Yes, very often; and you shall, too, when you come to our house: but you have already seen much greater effects from it than these."

"Who, I? I never saw any thing of it in my life; nor ever heard of such a thing as electricity, till this morning."

"Did you never see lightning?" asked Henry."

"Yes, very often."

"Then that is electrical fluid. When one cloud has collected a greater quantity than another, as soon as they come near each other, that one which is full, immediately communicates so much of its contents to the empty one, as to make them equal; the passing of the fluid from one cloud to the other, causes the appearance of lightning, and the

noise

noise which it makes in its passage through the air, is thunder."

"Dear me," said Charles, "I always thought thunder had been the sound of an angry voice from heaven; and that lightning was fire, thrown down to destroy wicked people."

"Those who have spoken of the Divine Being to you," replied Henry, "have represented him very differently from what my father has always done to me; for he speaks of him as a kind and indulgent Father, who is grieved when his children do wrong, but seldom takes such violent methods of showing his displeasure."

"But what is the use of electricity?" asked Charles.

"I am afraid I do not understand enough of it myself to explain its uses; but I have no doubt that there are many, for my father has often told me that Nature is too economical to make any thing that is not of use, and too benevolent not to make it much more beneficial than hurtful. But we will read that

volume of Scientific Dialogues which is on electricity together, and I will help you to understand it, as well as I can. It will be nice amusement for us in the evenings."

"I shall like that very much," said Charles, "and it is very good in you to take so much pains with such a little boy as I am."

"I was once as little myself," said Henry, "and my father and mother were much more superior to me than I am to you; and yet they were so kind as to teach me all I know, and would have taught me a great deal more, if I had been as willing to receive information, as they were to give it."

They were now interrupted by George's returning. "Well," said he, "is the lecture over yet; or must I wait a little longer at the door, for I have no ticket of admittance."

"No, you may come in," said Henry, smiling, "and we will finish our lecture for to-night; for I have said all I know, and I rather think Charles has got as much as he can understand."

"And

"And so you have made poor little Charles here as wise as yourself; and he will not be afraid of ghosts and witches any more."

"I hope not," said Henry.

"No," said Charles, "I shall not be afraid of such a fish as we saw this morning; for I can tell you what kind of a fish it was: they call it an electric ray, and it gives that shock to defend itself and to help it to catch its prey. And Henry is going to read about electricity to me in the evenings, out of a book that I have forgot the name of, and—."

"And to make you as wise as himself," said George, finishing his speech for him. "That's right; and when you have learned all, I will be your scholar. But come, Careful says it is time for you to go to bed; so pack up, my little philosopher, and tell us, to-morrow morning, of all the grand discoveries you have made."

Charles shook hands with Henry, and took his leave of George, with more cheerfulness and confidence than he had ever ventured to do before.

CHAP. IV.

The Machine.

CHARLES laid his head upon his pillow with a mind fully occupied with the subject of their evenings conversation, and persuaded himself, as he reflected on the pains which Henry had taken, to convince him that the fish which had given him so much alarm, was only a remarkable instance of the wonderful care of Providence, to adapt the formation of its creatures to the different stations which they had to fill, that he now knew better than to be so soon frightened again. This, however, was only a temporary fit of philosophy, which was very soon to be destroyed; for he had not lain long, before he was alarmed with the sound of three loud knocks against the wall of the room, and looking up to see from what it proceeded, his surprise and terror were increased to a great degree, by seeing,

at the same instant, the door of a closet, which was directly opposite to his bed, fly open with great violence; and, to his astonishment, he beheld the figure of the very fish which had already given him so much uneasiness, apparently composed of fire: from its mouth seemed to issue flaming letters; and Charles read the words, "Mock not my power." Poor Charles was struck with extreme terror at this sight; and the idea of his own temerity made him tremble with fear, for the consequences of his having thus excited the rage of an evil spirit. "Ah," thought he, "Henry meant to do me a kindness when he persuaded me to think that there was nothing unnatural about that fish; but I was very silly to be persuaded by him, for I certainly knew better than he did this time, though he is so much cleverer than I in every thing else. But I must not be persuaded by him again, for we may perhaps bring some great evil on ourselves, if we continue to mock such things." Poor Charles did not dare to look up again, but covering his head close over

over with the bed-clothes, he lay trembling and listening with dread, lest this should not be all that he had to encounter, till, at length, he heard three more knocks given, and immediately after the door flapped too, with as much violence as it had flown open. Charles now ventured again to breathe, but not to raise his eyes, fearful, lest in so doing, he should meet with some object still more frightful than that which yet seemed present to his imagination, till, at length, they were sealed in sleep. Still, however, his fancy dwelt upon the idea of the enraged spirit, and presented many frightful images of its malice and revenge. The rays of the sun darting through his curtain, at length roused him from his uneasy sleep, and gave him courage to look about the room. Nothing was to be seen different from usual, and he almost began to doubt whether it was not all a dream; but the clear recollection which he had of the strange appearance that he had seen, did not long allow him to doubt of its reality. He determined, however, not to say any thing about

about it, to George or Henry, lest they, by making a jest of it, should draw him into some greater misfortune. He joined them at the breakfast table with an anxious and uneasy countenance; and Henry was sorry to see, that instead of speaking with the same pleasure which he had done the night before, of their intended evening's amusement, he was silent and reserved; and when George joked him about the bewitched fish, his eyes filled with tears, and he begged, in timid accents, that he would not say any thing about it.

Henry's mind had been very differently employed the preceding night; for, pleased with the idea of having overcome poor Charles's dread of the bewitched fish, his next desire was to put him into the way of acquiring information; convinced, that as his understanding improved, his mind would gain strength to overcome the weak and foolish fears, which, if indulged, might render him unfit to go through life, either with pleasure or respectability. They had fixed to read an account of electricity together, but

Henry

Henry was afraid that Charles would not be able to form much idea of the effect of the different experiments, without the aid of a machine. To supply this want, therefore, was the grand subject of consideration. The idea occurred to him, of making a machine himself, on a small scale, which might serve, in some degree, to illustrate the subject: and no sooner did it enter his mind, than he determined to try to put it in execution. He had always been in the habit of using work-tools; as it had been an object with his father, at the same time that he was informing the mind of his son, to put him into the way of making use of his hands. "Should you never have occasion to apply your abilities to any other purpose," he would sometimes say to him, "it will, at least, enable you to make an experiment neatly; but, as there is no accounting for the fluctuations of fortune, we do not know but that it may, one day or other, be of essential importance to you to find that you have a pair of hands as well as a head."

Henry

Henry rose in the morning with a determination to try his skill in making an electrical machine, which he intended to do privately, that it might be a greater surprise to Charles, should he succeed. After breakfast, therefore, when asked by George what they should do with themselves;—"I shall leave you and Charles to yourselves to-day," said he, "for I am going to be busy in my own room."

"Preparing a philosophical lecture, I suppose, for the evening," replied George, "and if that is the case, I hope you will employ Charles and me to distribute the tickets for you. Or Charles could write a poetical bill of fare, (for Charles is a great poet, though you, perhaps, would not suspect it,) and stand with it, pasted on a board, as the lottery people do, at the end of the streets."

"That is so ingenious a thought," said Henry, good-temperedly, "that you shall be admitted gratis for it, when I commence lecturer; but at present, I will not trouble you to put it in practice."

"I am sorry for it," replied George, "for

it would have been a fine employment for us, particularly for poor little Charles here, so long as it was light; but Charles does not like the dark: do you, Charles?"

"No," answered Charles, with great simplicity.

"That is honest, however," returned George, "and I am glad to find, that in spite of all your cowardice, you have still courage to speak the truth."

"Good morning," said Henry, "I must go, for I have a great deal to do to-day."

"And I will go and take a ride," said George, ringing the bell, and ordering his horse; "and I would advise you, Charles, to send for some old woman in the neighbourhood, to come and talk to you about ghosts and hobgoblins."

Charles, however, as soon as he saw George mounted, took up the arrows which Henry had given him the day before, and hastened to the garden to practise with them; determined, if possible, to show George that he was not so great a dunce as he had supposed.

Henry's

Henry's first object was to collect such materials together as he thought he should need, and for this purpose he went down into the kitchen, to beg the assistance of the servants; for Henry, though he had never been in the habit of associating with servants, had never been forbidden to speak to them occasionally, and to ask for their assistance; which he was always sure of getting with readiness and alacrity, for he always asked for it with civility and gentleness. His first care was to get a pretty strong, flat piece of wood, to serve for the stand, or bottom of the machine: a glass tube, which had been used to put over a lamp, was his cylinder, into each end of which he fastened a round piece of wood, with part of a strong iron skewer forced into the middle of each end, and by them he rested his cylinder on two pieces of wood, which he had previously made to stand upright at proper distances, on the foundation of the machine; and he had the pleasure to find, that by means of the handle of an old coffee grinder, he could turn his cylinder

round with great ease. His next care was to get a cushion, which he made by covering a small piece of wood with leather, and stuffing wool very tight in between them, and then nailed it fast round: this he fixed across the top of a piece of dry wood, similar to those which supported the cylinder, and placed it so, that the cushion should press very close upon the cylinder. Highly pleased with his progress so far, he now began to consider how he should contrive a conductor, and felt some fear of his success in this part of his undertaking, when he considered that it was necessary it should be supported by glass; and how to meet with a piece of glass suitable for the purpose, he did not at all know. He again had recourse to the housekeeper, however, and endeavoured to make her understand what he wanted; but as she could not enter into the nature of his wants, she took him into the kitchen, and opening the door of a closet which contained a great many things which were not made any use of, she begged that he would look amongst them,

and

and try to find what would do for him there. "You may pull to pieces, or do what you like with, any thing you can find, Master Henry," said she, "for there is nothing there, but what has been put by as lumber."

Henry looked at this assortment of old things, with as much pleasure as though they had been a collection of the most elegant materials, and soon found a conductor, in the round handle of an old lantern, which was close at each end; for it had fortunately been made for the purpose of holding an additional candle, as a resource in case of the failure of that which was in use. Still, however, he looked in vain for a glass supporter for his conductor, when he was attracted to a window which looked into the back yard, by the sound of a child crying very piteously. "It is only a little nephew of one of the servants, that is come to see her to-day," said the housekeeper to Henry, as he went to the window; "and, I suppose, he has tumbled down, or hurt himself some way or other." It was so natural to Henry, when

he heard the sound of distress, to enquire the cause, and endeavour to remove it, that he almost involuntarily proceeded to the yard, to see what really was the matter with the child, which still continued to cry; and his humanity was amply rewarded, for he found that the little boy had fallen and hurt himself a little, but his principal distress arose from his having, in his fall, broken a glass trumpet, which his father had that morning brought him. "Oh, what a nice stand this will make for my conductor!" exclaimed Henry, taking up the broken shank of the trumpet: "I could not have got any thing better, if I had searched the whole day. And here is money," added he, taking a shilling out of his pocket, and giving it to the little boy, "to buy something else, that you will like better than your broken trumpet." The child's face immediately brightened, and they parted, mutually pleased with their bargains.

The handle of the lantern, when the middle part was taken out, for it had been fixed

on

on the lantern in the shape of a T, had a hole, into which the shank of the trumpet exactly fitted. He wanted nothing now but the forks at the end of the conductor next to the cylinder, and the round knob at the other; and on describing what he was still in want of to the housekeeper, she said, she thought she could soon supply him with these further requisites, and opening a drawer she took out some large hat pins, which had steel knobs at the ends, and told him, if they would do, they were at his service. Henry thanked her very gratefully for her present, and soon found that by making holes at each end of the conductor, and putting these pins through, he was supplied at once with the sharp points for the purpose of collecting the electric fluid from the cylinder, and a knob to discharge it by at the other end. For a discharging-rod he supplied an old fork, the prongs of which he stretched out as wide as he could; and, instead of the haft, he fixed it into another piece of the valuable trumpet shank.

Having thus far prepared a machine, he wanted nothing but a jar to collect the electric fluid in, which he soon contrived. He found, in the pantry, a wide necked bottle, in which green gooseberries had been kept; into this bottle he put a few iron filings, which the servant used for cleaning knives. Into George's bullet-mould he placed the eye of an iron skewer, and run lead into it; this was fastened into a cork, at such a distance from the ball, that the point of the skewer might touch the filings. To the outside of the bottle he pasted some tin foil, which one of the servants procured for him; thus, from the machine, he filled the jar, by connecting the knob to it, so that by forming a communication from the knob of the jar, through his own, or any other person's body, he found that, on touching the outside of the jar at the same time, a shock was received.

And now he had the pleasure of seeing his little machine completed, and found that it gave a considerably stronger shock than that received

received from the Electric Ray*. "Now," said he, to himself, "I shall be able to show Charles that I can give him a shock without the aid either of witches or any other supernatural power." It was necessary, however, that the glue should dry before the machine was much used; he determined, therefore, to put it carefully by, and say nothing of it to his companions, till the following evening. This he had only just time to do, before he was summoned to dinner. "Dear me, is it possible that it can be four o'clock!" said he, on hearing that dinner was on the table; "how very short this morning has been!"

"It is well for you, if you think so," said George, who had heard Henry's remark as he entered the dining-room; I am sure it has not been so with me, for I have been riding

* A machine, similar to this, was made by a boy of eleven years of age, at the school of Mr. Tomelin, of Loughborough; a gentleman who very judiciously encourages his pupils in the practice of little philosophical experiments of this kind, and thus makes amusement and instruction go hand in hand.

about

about all the morning, without having any thing to ride for. I wish it had been the hunting season, and then there would have been some pleasure in one's ride."

"Is hunting the pleasantest amusement that you meet with in your rides?" said Henry.

"Why, what pleasanter do you know of?" asked George.

"I should enjoy a ride into the country, at this time of the year, when all the vegetables are putting forth, much more," replied Henry, particularly in such a rich, beautiful country as this. I would go and see how the apple blossoms looked, and whether it was likely to prove a good cider year; or you might go and try if you could find any pretty pieces of marble, of which they say there is so much in this part of the county, that the high roads are even sometimes made over rocks of it; or you might ride by the sea-side, and see the people busy fishing."

"All that might do very well for such quiet beings as you," said George; "but it does not suit me: I must have a little more life in my motions."

"Or

"Or rather death," replied Henry; "for death is your object in following the hounds."

"No," said George, "it is the pleasure of seeing the spirit of the dogs and horses, the swiftness with which they pursue the hare, and the anxiety one feels to be in at the death."

"That is what I said,—that your pleasure depends upon seeing the harmless animal first thrown into convulsions, and then torn in pieces. You could not, I am sure, feel any pleasure, if you were to give yourself time to think what the poor hare suffers all the time."

"Oh, I never think of that," replied George; "besides, supposing they do suffer, the pain of a poor, insignificant hare is nothing, compared to the pleasure which a number of superior animals enjoy in the hunt."

"Do you think you ought to call them superior animals," asked Henry, "when they are capable of finding amusement in such cruelty? If they really are so, ought they not to know better? I have often heard my father say, that men disgraced their natures, when they found pleasure in tormenting

ing

ing the weak and helpless: so far from being manly, it is mean and cowardly in the highest degree. Besides all the damage that it does to the fields and hedges, ask the poor farmer, who has just had his ground ploughed up, and his hedges destroyed, if he thinks it an innocent amusement?"

"I will not ask any thing about it," said George, with a conscious smile, "lest I should be persuaded against hunting again."

"That I hope you will be, when you come to visit us, and hear my father speak about it; for he can say a great deal more on the subject than I can, and I will take care that you hear his opinion."

"I am sure I will never hunt," said Charles, earnestly.

"That's right," said Henry; "never show your courage by tormenting those who are weaker than yourself. If you are to have pleasure in shedding blood, let it at least be with an adversary of equal strength, that the chances may be equal."

"But pray," said George, desirous of changing

changing the subject, "may we know what you have been so busy with to-day?"

"Yes," replied Henry, "if you will wait till to-morrow evening."

"I will wait as patiently as I can," said Charles; "but I wish very much to know what it is."

Charles had a double motive for this wish, for he did not suppose that Henry's promised amusement had any thing to do with electricity, a subject which he now dreaded exceedingly, as being so nearly allied to that of the bewitched fish; for he was persuaded it was impossible to touch upon it, without exciting the malice of that evil spirit; he determined, therefore, not to say any thing to remind him of the projected lecture. Nor did Henry, who was desirous of having his machine ready to produce at the first going off, make any proposal this evening to begin; and Charles was in hopes that, before another night, it might be forgotten entirely.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The Spectre.

"NOW," said Henry, entering the room the following evening, just as the shutters, with the night, were closed in, "now you shall see my yesterday's work; and, I hope, you will acknowledge I was not idle."

"What is it?" said Charles, going to the table on which Henry had placed his machine, and looking at it with surprise, and a mixture of disappointment, "I cannot think what it can be."

"It is an electrical machine," replied Henry, "of my own manufacturing; and, though it is not very handsome in appearance, I assure you it is better than it looks, and will give you quite as strong a shock as you received from the bewitched fish." Charles shrunk back with horror. "I shall now be much better able to make you understand the extraordinary

extraordinary property which that fish possessed," continued Henry, without observing the fear expressed in Charles's countenance, "than I was when we read the account of it; and can show you several experiments with the machine, which will, I hope, be very amusing to you. Come near, and I will first tell you the names and uses of the different parts."

"No!" said Charles, shrinking still further back, "I had rather not hear any thing about it."

"Not hear any thing about it!" exclaimed Henry, looking at him with surprise; "not after all the pains which I have taken to make it on purpose for you! Surely you are in jest, for do not you remember the agreement we made, to read the account of electricity, which is in Scientific Dialogues, together? and I made this machine on purpose that you might understand it better."

"You were very good," said Charles, who had now got quite to the other side of the room, "and I am much obliged to you;

but I shall be still more so, if you will not say any thing more about it, for I have a particular reason for not wishing it to be mentioned any more."

George, who had hitherto remained silent, now burst into a loud laugh. "Now," said he, as soon as he could speak, "pray which of us knew this wiseacre best, Henry, you or I?"

Henry, who felt his patience a good deal tried, did not speak just immediately. At length, recollecting himself, "I must not expect to work miracles all at once," said he; "nor ought I to insist upon amusing Charles, against his will. I shall, therefore, put my machine by for the present, and wait for another opportunity to bring it into use."

"You are a noble fellow!" exclaimed George, with warmth: "I wish I could learn to be like you."

"If you really wish it," replied Henry, you will soon be much superior, for you are already much cleverer than I am." Then, taking up his slighted machine, he conveyed it

it back to his own room, with as much good temper as he had brought it down. He determined not to say any more to Charles at present on the subject, for he was persuaded that he had met with something which had renewed his former fears of the bewitched fish; and he hoped, by waiting a little, he might perhaps find it out, and, by that means, be better able to remove his prejudice.

"Charles," said George, as they placed themselves round the table, with their books and drawings, "I have left my pencil on my room table, I wish you would go and bring it me down. Run, my good lad, it is not quite dark, and you will easily find it."

Willing as Charles was, at all times, to oblige, its being so nearly dark, and the thought of the ghost, which scarcely ever left his imagination, made him hesitate.

"Come, why do you not go?" said George; "you surely are not frightened."

Ashamed to acknowledge the truth, Charles endeavoured to pluck up his courage, and

went up stairs. "Now we shall have a proof of this noble knight's valour," said George, rising, and following softly after him.

"I hope you are not going to frighten him," said Henry. George left the room without answering, and, in a very few minutes afterwards, Henry heard the sound of something falling down stairs; and, before he could get out of the room, to see what was the matter, George burst in, holding his sides, and laughing most violently. Henry asked, several times, what was the matter, before he could get an answer. "Oh, poor little Charley has got a much greater shock than your machine would have given him!" cried George, when he could speak.

"Indeed, George," said Henry, "you are exceedingly to blame, for tormenting this poor boy in such a manner. You do not know but you may be laying up misery for him all his life by it."

"I hope," said George, assuming a look of great gravity, "I hope, Henry, you are designed

designed for the church; for certainly you would make a most excellent preacher, and would, no doubt, make a great many converts."

"I shall not have much confidence in my skill in that way," said Henry, good temperedly, "till I have made one of you. But I will not stay to do it just now," continued he, taking up a candle, "but must go and look after poor Charles." On arriving at the flight of stairs which led to Charles's apartment, Henry found him sitting on the bottom step, pale and trembling. "What is the matter?" asked Henry, with a look of concern.

"I have fallen down these stairs," replied Charles, scarcely able to speak for tears, which, however, he was unwilling to give vent to.

"What made you in so great a hurry? Why did you not take time, and come down carefully?"

"Because—because—" said Charles, hesitating.

"Because what?" enquired Henry.

"I am afraid to tell you," replied Charles, "lest you should make a jest of it."

"Nay, you may depend upon it," said Henry, "I will not make a jest of any thing that seems to give you so much pain."

"Well then," resumed Charles, drawing Henry close to him, and speaking in a soft voice, as if almost afraid of hearing himself, "it is because there has a ghost appeared to me."

"Indeed!" said Henry, with difficulty suppressing a smile; "and what form did it appear in?"

"In the form of the bewitched fish," replied Charles, with a look of great solemnity.

"Well, come," said Henry, no longer able to withhold from smiling, "there is nothing very terrible in that appearance, however!"

"Nay now, Henry, you know you promised not to make a joke of it."

"No more I will," said Henry, composing his countenance; "but let me hear something more

more about it." Charles now described the first appearance of the ghost, with all the horrors with which it had presented itself to his imagination; and added, that he had seen it again on passing his own room, for the door was open, and he could see the closet, which was directly opposite to it; and that he had been so much frightened, that it had made him slip his foot and fall down stairs. Henry immediately went, with the expectation of seeing what it was that had given this alarm; but it was in vain that he looked about the room, the closet-door was not only shut, but quite fast, and he returned to Charles, who still kept his post on the stairs, and was obliged to acknowledge himself unable to explain the cause of his fright.

"No," said Charles, with a solemn countenance, "I dare say it will not appear to you; for ghosts seldom appear to more than one person."

"Then I will tell you what I will do," said Henry: "I will sleep with you to-night, and then, if it is afraid of appearing before me,

me, you will be relieved from a troublesome visitor; and if not, I shall have an opportunity either of convincing you that it is a ghost made by mortal hands, or else of being convinced myself that it is wrong to laugh at such appearances."

"I wish that may be the case," said Charles, "for I dare say it is all owing to our having made game of the bewitched fish, that this has come upon us."

"I must bargain with you, however," said Henry, "that you do not say a word to George of my intention of sleeping with you to-night. We will go to our own rooms as usual, and I will come to you afterwards." This Charles readily agreed to, and they went down stairs.

"Well, Charles," said George, "I hope you have brought me my pencil at last, for indeed I have waited a long time for it. And, may I ask," added he, as Charles gave him the pencil into his hand, "what made you so long on the journey?"

"I slipt

"I slipt my foot," answered Charles, "and fell down a whole flight of stairs."

"Why, that would only bring you sooner to the bottom," said George, laughing; "but, I suppose, you were like most other babies when they fall down, you waited for somebody to come and raise you up again!"

"You have got your pencil now," said Henry, who was afraid of Charles's exposing himself if they continued the subject, "so we will let the matter drop, if you please."

When bed-time came, poor Charles's heart sunk within him. He scarcely dared to raise his eyes as he entered his room, and even in the sound of his own breath he fancied he heard the approach of the dreaded spectre. He placed the candle close by the bed, into which he took care to get, before he ventured to put it out; but just as he had his hand on the extinguisher for that purpose, he heard the sound of a door opening, and, starting with terror, let the extinguisher drop; and, in catching back his hand, knocked down the candle, which was put out in the fall.

"What

"What is the matter?" said Henry, for it was he who had opened the door; "what are you in such a bustle about?"

"Oh! is it you?" said Charles.

"Yes: who else did you think it was?"

"I do not know," replied Charles, ashamed of acknowledging his alarm; "but, come to bed."

"I must undress first," said Henry.

"Oh dear! have you to undress yet, and it is quite dark."

"Yes; but what does that signify? Am I less safe because the candle is put out?"

"I cannot tell," replied Charles, "but I do not like to be in the dark."

"I have always," said Henry, "been accustomed to go about in the dark, just with the same ease as though it were noonday. Indeed, at home we are not allowed a candle to go to bed with; for my father and mother always taught us to reflect, that the Great Being who governs the world is always watching over us, and that he can see by night as well as by day. Do you not remember that

beautiful

beautiful hymn of Mrs. Barbauld's, which you showed me yesterday, and which you seemed to admire so much? You know, it says: 'There is an eye that never sleepeth. There is an eye that seeth in dark night, as well as in sunshine! The eye that sleepeth not is God's. His hand is always stretched out over us. You may sleep, for he never sleeps; you may close your eyes in safety, for his eye is always open to protect you.'"

"Yes," said Charles, "I often think of that; but yet I do not know what is the reason of all those frightful appearances in the dark, for one sees nothing of them when it is light."

"It is only because it is dark, and you see them indistinctly, that they appear frightful," replied Henry.

"And do you really not believe that there are such things as ghosts?" asked Charles.

"Indeed I do not," answered Henry: "I believe that the Divine Being is too good and kind to his creatures to suffer them to be distressed and made unhappy from such a cause; and

and I have not the least doubt that if this ghost, which has given you so much alarm, could be seen in day-light, you would find that you had not the least cause for fear."

"Oh, hush!" said Charles, shocked at his speaking with so little respect on such a subject.

Henry now laid his head on the pillow, and, free from care and anxiety, he had nearly sunk into a sound sleep, when Charles, who had watched in almost breathless expectation, gave him a violent shake, and whispered, it was come.

"What is come?" said Henry, starting, for he had forgot what he had come to watch for.

"Hush!" said Charles; "do not speak loud, but it is come! the ghost is come!"

Henry raised himself in bed, and immediately saw the object, exactly as Charles had described it; then, getting out very gently, he went softly to the closet, whilst poor Charles made the bed shake with his agitation, and and would have stopped Henry from venturing

ing so near, but his tongue refused him utterance, nor had he power to raise his hand to hold him. At length the sound of a concealed laugh from Henry relieved him, and he began to breathe. "I have got it!" said Henry, speaking softly, from the fear of being heard, but not by the ghost, "I have got it, and I will keep it till morning, that we may be better able to examine it, and you will see the closet-door will shut again just as well now the ghost is removed as it did before. It will lie there very quietly," continued he, laying it upon the table, "till morning, for it is nothing but a harmless piece of pasteboard."

"But it still shines," said Charles, considerably relieved, though not quite without fear.

"That I will explain to-morrow," said Henry, "but let us go to sleep for the present, and think no more about it."

So saying, he once more closed his eyes, and was soon locked in a sound sleep; nor was Charles long in following his example.

CHAP. VI.

The Denouement.

THE bright beams of the morning sun unsealed the eyes of the sleepers, who were no sooner dressed, than Henry invited Charles to assist him in examining the ghost of the preceding night. "You see," said he, taking it up, "it is nothing more than a piece of paste-board cut out in the shape of a fish, with letters also formed of paste-board, fastened to its mouth."

"But what made it shine like fire," asked Charles, "for it does not do so now?"

"Because it was covered with phosphorus," replied Henry.

"Phosphorus! What is that?" asked Charles.

"It is a substance which is extracted from different kinds of animal bodies, and which is of so inflammable a nature, that it takes fire

fire when exposed to the air, and appears bright in the dark; so that, when it is rubbed over any thing, as, for instance, over this piece of pasteboard, it gives it the appearance, when seen in the dark, of being composed entirely of fire, though, in reality, it is only the phosphorus itself, that is burning all the time."

"Then it is all burnt away now, I suppose," said Charles.

"Yes, the effect of the phosphorus itself, when in such small quantities, is soon off, but I believe when mixed with a little oil, it will continue a good deal longer; and I dare say, that which was covered over this pasteboard last night, was prepared in that way."

"But I do not understand," said Charles, "how it got into that closet, and what made the closet door open and shut without any body being near it."

"Nor I either, at present," returned Henry, "but I have no doubt of its being George's doing, some way or other, and it must be our business to find out how he

managed it, which he certainly did very neatly." Henry then went to the closet door to try to open it, but it resisted his utmost efforts. He then recollected that there was a little room adjoining to Charles's, on the other side of the closet, and thither they both hastened. On entering the room, Henry's difficulties were at once removed; for he found that this little room had formerly been a dressing room to Charles's apartment, and that they had been united by a short passage, which, on a partition being put up on the end joining the dressing room, had divided the two apartments, and made the passage into a closet on the side of the lodging room. Henry, on examining the partition very closely, thought that he perceived one of the pannels looser than the rest, and soon found that it came entirely out. This, he had no doubt, George had got done for the accomplishment of his purpose; for he well knew that he would not hesitate at any thing of the kind, when he had set his mind upon any particular object. On putting his hand through

through this hole, into the closet, he found a nail, a little above where the loose pannel fixed in, from which he had taken the pasteboard the night before. "You see," said he, "George has taken out the pannel, and after rubbing the pasteboard over with phosphorus, has hung it up on this nail; and after giving three knocks to excite your attention, has most likely pushed the door open with a stick, before he put up the pannel again."

"And see," said Charles, here is a piece of strong cord with one end put through this small hole, and the other twisted round this nail at the side of it."

"Ah, then that is what he has pulled the door to again with; and which prevented my opening it when I tried just now." Henry then untwisted the cord, and went round to the other room, to try the door, which now opened with the first attempt. "Now," said he, speaking through the hole of the pannel to Charles, "I think we have found out the whole of this grand secret."

"Yes," said Charles, in a tone of great glee, "I will go directly and tell George that we have found out his ghost."

"No," cried Henry, stopping him as he was leaving the room, "do not say any thing about it now, let us try to surprise him with it." To this Charles readily agreed, and after hanging up the paper fish on the nail again, and putting all things as they found them, they went down stairs, and met George in the breakfast-room. Charles's mind, relieved from a weight which had pressed upon it with an almost intolerable load, now rose in proportion to the weight of the burden from which it was relieved, and he could scarcely contain his spirits within any reasonable bounds. He talked almost incessantly, and laughed without appearing to have any thing to laugh at.

"What is the matter with Charles this morning," said George, "he does not seem like the same creature. He looks like a a balloon that is ready filled, and only wants the

the cord to be loosened for it to mount into the air."

"Oh, the cord *is* loosened," exclaimed Charles, rising from the table with agility, as they finished breakfast; "and I am free to go where I will; and if you choose, George, I will go into the garden, and try my skill with you in shooting with the bow and arrow."

"Done," said George, "for though you are not much bigger than you were on Tuesday morning, you have so much more life in you, that I think I can condescend to play with you this morning."

They hastened into the garden, and Henry, who declined joining them, that Charles might have the better chance, stood by, to take care that there was fair play. George took the first aim; then Charles came forward with a look of so much more confidence and courage than he had ever done before, and pointed his arrow and drew his string with such a steady hand, that George looked at him with astonishment. On the arrows being examined,

examined, George's was found nearest the mark; but Charles's were so near to them, that George, whose mind, though light and volatile, was superior to the smallest tincture of envy, exclaimed, "My arrows are the nearest, but yours are by far the best, Charles: indeed, I am astonished at the great improvement that you have made. You certainly have great merit, Henry, in the pains you have taken with him."

"No, indeed, I have not the least," replied Henry, "for it is all his own doing."

"But if you had not encouraged me so much," said Charles, looking affectionately in Henry's face, "I should never have thought of trying; so that I am obliged to you in the end for all the praise which George has been so good as to bestow."

"My goodness," said George, (who seemed for the instant, to feel something like compunction,) "only lies in giving you the praise which is your due, but Henry's is in having made you deserving of it."

Henry, who never felt any pleasure in receiving

ceiving praise at another's expence, now changed the subject, and they all spent the day together, in a much more sociable manner than they had ever done before. In the evening, Charles, who had been very busy writing for some time, put the paper into his pocket, and going to Henry, "I think, Henry," said he, "I have sense enough now to be able to look at your electrical machine without trembling, if you will be so good as to show it to me again." This was enough for Henry, who went and immediately brought it down. "You see," said he, placing his hitherto neglected machine on the table, it is rather a curious looking thing; however, it answers the purpose I wish it to do, as well as if it were much more elegant. This glass tube that is fixed across the stand upon these two supporters, is the cylinder, which is made to press so closely upon this cushion, that when turned round by the handle, it rubs constantly against it, which excites the electric fluid; for it is always possible to excite it,

it, by rubbing glass with any thing that is dry and soft."

"But what is that piece of black silk for, that looks as if it were intended for a night-cap."

"That is to prevent the electricity from making its escape; for it cannot pass through silk. Now we will put out the candle, and you will see it pass from the cylinder to the sharp points of this tin tube, which is called the conductor."

"Oh, yes, now I see it," exclaimed Charles, "how pretty it looks: they are like sparks of fire, but of a bluer colour than fire generally is. But what comes of them afterwards?"

"That we must now try to find out. You see this conductor is supported by glass; now, the reason that electricity is so easily excited upon glass, is because the fluid cannot pass through it, and it is therefore called an electric, or non-conductor; of course you see, as it cannot pass through glass, it has no way of escaping from the conductor, till we put

something

something near it. If you will put your knuckle to this knob, at the other end of the conductor, it will then have a way to get off, and will pass through your body to the ground." Charles rather hesitated, but Henry convinced him there was nothing to be afraid of, by putting his own first; and Charles saw sparks, with a slight crackling noise, pass from the knob to Henry's hand, and desirous of knowing the sensation which it caused, he ventured to put his own hand in the same place, and found it was only like a very slight prick of a pin.

"But this is nothing like what I felt from touching the fish," said he.

"No," replied Henry, "but I can soon make you feel the same." He then prepared, in the manner we have before described, to fill the inside of the jar. I will now cause the fluid to pass through your body," added he, which will give you just such a shock as the fish did."

"I should like to try it."

"You may easily do so, for my watch chain

chain will serve us for a conducting chain. We may try it with safety on this small machine, but I believe it is better not to venture too far on a large one, lest we should chance to get too strong a shock. But," added Henry, who felt for his watch, for the purpose of taking off the chain, "I have left my watch in my bed-room, and must go for it."

"Oh, I will go," cried Charles, with readiness; "I will bring it in a minute."

"What! without a candle," exclaimed George, who had hitherto been a silent observer of Charles's philosophical enquiries. Charles went off in too great a hurry to make any answer; but was so long in returning, that George was persuaded he had met with something to frighten him. "We shall hear him tumbling down stairs again, soon," said he, "for he has no doubt met with another ghost." At length Charles returned, holding out one hand, with the watch in it, and the other behind his back. "How did you ever

ever manage to get up stairs and down again in the dark," asked George.

"I was not in the dark," answered Charles, with an arch smile.

"What light had you then?"

"I had your ghost," replied Charles, drawing his hand from behind him, and producing the pasteboard, which he had staid to rub over with some phosphorus, that he had found in the little room where the ghost scene was acted, and which still burnt with great brightness.

George looked with astonishment. "How in the world did you ever find it out," exclaimed he; "I thought you never would have discovered the trick."

"I do not think I ever should," returned Charles, "but I will tell you all about it if you can be at the trouble to listen to a long story." Then taking the paper from his pocket, on which he had been writing in the early part of the evening, he began, with a pretended air of gravity, to read the following

GHOST STORY.

Ye who a dismal tale would hear,
To make your cheek turn pale,
On me bestow a ready ear,
And listen to my tale.

Poor Charles had learn'd, in early life,
To hear with horror keen,
Of frightful ghost and goblin strife,
From those who said they'd seen.

And as they oft the story told,
Who said the facts they knew,
Young Charles could never be so bold,
As not to think them true.

But still, though all these cares and fears
His heart full often griev'd,
And fill'd his eyes with woful tears,
Devoutly he believ'd.

One night, when he repair'd to bed,
He pigg'd 'neath sheet and rug;
And when he cover'd o'er his head,
He thought himself quite snug.

But

But, sad to tell, it was not long
He lay reliev'd from fears,
For soon three knocks, both loud and strong,
Upon the floor he hears.

Th' unthinking youth, to learn the cause,
His head now dar'd to raise!
But soon the sight his spirit awes,
And fills him with amaze!

For near his bed a fish there seem'd,
Which shone all burning bright,
And as its eye with anger gleam'd,
The darken'd room was light.

And though was heard no voice or tone,
Words from its mouth there spring:
A speaking fish, you all must own,
A strange and frightful thing.

Charles ventur'd not to look again,
But closely shut his eyes;
And ease and comfort sought in vain,
Till morning beams arise.

And even then, his aching sight
The goblin phantom sees:
And fancies still some cause of fright,
In every whispering breeze.

Till he, at length, resolves to find
Some friend to share his woes;
And in some kind and pitying mind,
His secret to repose.

To Henry he the story tells,
Who, like a lion bold,
Declares he'll see the fairy spells,
And their dread mask unfold.

True to his word, when night returns
To Charles's room he hies,
And soon the frightful spectre burns,
Before their wondering eyes.

At once, with fearless step away,
Hal goes to view it near;
Whilst at the sight poor Charley lay,
And scarcely breath'd for fear.

But soon, at Henry's laugh outright,
He dares to raise his eyes,
When lo! the frightful goblin sprite,
In Henry's hand he spies.

"A piece of pasteboard; 'tis no more;"
Said Hal, "believe it true;
With phosphorus all cover'd o'er,
Which makes it bright to view."

And now they find, a witty wag
The trick had play'd in glee;
And, fear remov'd, e'en Charles could brag
And laugh as well as he.

Now learn from this true story told,
Ye ghost-believing train,
And when a spectre ye behold,
Take heart, and look again.

"Indeed, Charles, you have made a most excellent story of it," said Henry, as Charles ceased reading: there are very few people would like to make such a joke of themselves."

"And at the same time take so much care to avoid any ill-natured accusations against the person who had caused his fears," said George; "but though you are too good to say any thing about it, Charles, I know very well that I have often behaved very ill to you. But you will see in future, I hope, that I can both admire Henry, and copy him."

"You are too good," said Charles, with a modest

modest blush, "to make apologies to such a little boy as I am."

"By way of paying you for your entertaining story," said Henry, who saw that Charles would rather that the subject were changed, "I will give you my little machine; and you may take it to school, and show off some electrical experiments amongst your school-fellows."

"Oh, thank you!" cried Charles, with great glee, "I shall have rare sport in giving them shocks!"

"I," said George, "shall receive a shock whenever I look at it; but I hope it will have as good an effect on me as electric shocks often have on invalids, and serve to make me much better for the time to come, than I have hitherto been.

THE END.

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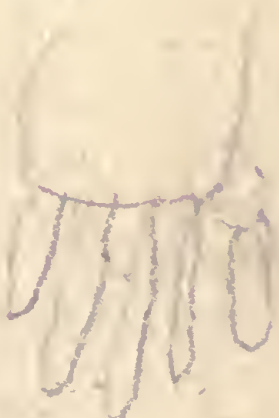
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